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THESIS

**COUNTERINSURGENCY PRINCIPLES
FOR CONTEMPORARY INTERNAL CONFLICT**

by

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March 2012

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**COUNTERINSURGENCY PRINCIPLES
FOR CONTEMPORARY INTERNAL CONFLICT**

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ABSTRACT

For 26 years, Sri Lankan Armed Forces applied counterinsurgency principles (COIN) while fighting against LTTE terrorists, but could not achieve the aim of defeating terrorism. During this period, the LTTE was able to establish itself as a real conventional army. It expanded its capabilities to include a naval wing (sea tiger wing), and an air wing. Its cadres were well motivated to conduct three-dimensional missions (land, air and sea) as well as suicide missions. It was not until the fourth phase, however—Eelam War IV of the Sri Lanka campaign—that the Sri Lankan government was able to establish peace within the country again in 2009. In this context, the researcher examines why success eluded Sri Lanka until the final phase of the campaign, since the same principles (COIN) were followed in all battles. Eelam War IV featured important changes to the Sri Lankan government's COIN strategy. Those changes were incorporated into the outcomes in order to develop analysis on this topic. Further, this study will offer a new approach to analyzing the Sri Lanka insurgency. As a further outcome, the paper may provide opportunity for scholarly assessment by decision makers to assess the possibility of modifying counterinsurgency principles based on the Sri Lankan experience.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

C2	Command and Control
CDF	Civil Defense Force
CFA	Cease Fire Agreement
COIN	Counter Insurgency
DI	Director Intelligence
GOSL	Government of Sri Lanka
HUMINT	Human Intelligence
IDPs	Internally Displaced Personnel
IHL	International Humanitarian Law
IPKF	Indian Peacekeeping Forces
LTTE	Liberation Tamil Tigers of Eelam
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NSC	National Security Council
RMA	Revolutions in Military Affairs
SIOT	Special Infantry Operations Team
SLA	Sri Lanka Army
SLN	Sri Lanka Navy
SLWJA	Sri Lanka Working Journalists Association
TULF	Tamil United Liberation Front
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. MAJOR RESEARCH QUESTION

The recent victory by the Sri Lankan military in a bloody separatist war ended 26 long years of brutal fighting in Sri Lanka. The end result was the total destruction and defeat of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) terrorist organisation. This conflict has drawn the interest of many nations to find out what new strategies and plans contributed to the success of the fourth and final phase—Elam War IV—also named the “Humanitarian Operation.”

After nearly three decades (1983 to 2009) of conflict, the Sri Lankan government, including the Armed Forces, followed the principles of COIN. There were four major phases of this war: Elam War I, Elam War II, Elam War III and Elam War IV. The battles against the LTTE were costly—approximately tens of thousands Sri Lankan lives were lost, many more injured and vast amounts of resources were destroyed or lost across the country. The first three battles failed to meet their objective, which was the end of terrorism in Sri Lanka. However, Elam War IV was able to eradicate terrorism. As a result, there were a number of lessons learned from the successes and failures in fighting domestic terrorism.

In this context, this thesis will strive to answer the questions: What enabled Sri Lanka to succeed in Elam War IV? What were the critical differences from the three previous phases? What explains Sri Lanka’s success after two decades of failure? In answering these questions, this study attempts to address lessons learned from Sri Lanka and how those lessons might compel us to reassess existing counterinsurgency doctrines.

B. IMPORTANCE

The prevalence of conflict and civil war around the world, especially in the current Western war on violent Islamist extremists, has garnered a great deal of attention from the international community. Non-state actors, guerrillas, and their factions have constantly confronted the writ of government. How states have managed to deal with guerrillas is a critical query within the system of international relations. Internal armed

conflict among states and non-state actors has become a leading fashion in warfare since World War II. Insurgent organizations within a country, keen to enact political change centred on deep-rooted grievances, often take up arms in an effort to modify the country's ruling authorities, overthrow the existing government, or break free from their control.¹ An understanding of these subtleties between the ruling party and the rebellion groups, which challenge the country's integrity and sovereignty, may offer important lessons for policy makers and strategists in formulating counterinsurgency responses.

As the global community searches for strategies or countermeasures to deal with this global problem, it is advisable to learn lessons from countries that have successfully dealt with insurgents.

Sri Lanka is one of those countries that successfully eradicated a terrorist threat. Sri Lanka offers an important case study because its campaign was lengthy, including distinct phases of fighting against a formidable insurgent organisation, thus offering us longitudinal comparative lessons in both successes and failures. In addition, it offers valuable information about counterinsurgency campaigns operated by a resource-poor country, as opposed to the methods used in campaigns by superpowers against terrorist organisations.

Existing counterinsurgency principles and strategies were formulated in 1951, based on the British Malayan campaign.² Many nations, including superpowers and small countries like Sri Lanka, have adopted these principles and have achieved successes as well as failures. However, the strategies covering these counterinsurgency principles have gaps and lapses in the face of present-day conflicts.

There may be other, less tangible factors to consider in Sri Lanka's success. Although Sri Lanka was a developing country with minimal support from Western and regional powers, it survived and succeeded in its counterinsurgency campaign, and, among things, it may be that the political will of the populace was part of that success.

¹ U.S. Army, *Field Manual 3-24: Counter Insurgency* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army Headquarters, 2000), 12.

² *Counter Insurgency Operations: AFM Vol (B)* (Colombo, Sri Lanka: Defense Services Command and Staff Collage, Sri Lanka, 2005), i-ix.

Finally, this study will offer a new method for analysing Sri Lankan terrorism. No author or scholar has yet used COIN principles as a theoretical structure in which to gauge Sri Lanka's political and military action against the LTTE's "separate state struggle" against the government. As a further outcome, the paper may provide opportunity for scholarly assessment by decision makers to assess the possibility of modifying counterinsurgency principles based on the Sri Lankan experience.

C. PROBLEM AND HYPOTHESES

For 26 years, Sri Lankan Armed Forces applied counterinsurgency principles while fighting against LTTE terrorists, but could not achieve the aim of defeating terrorism. During this period, the LTTE was able to establish itself as a real conventional army. It expanded its capabilities to include a naval wing (sea tiger wing), and an air wing. Its cadres were well motivated to conduct three-dimensional missions (land, air and sea) as well as suicide missions. It was not until the fourth phase (Eelam War IV) of the Sri Lankan campaign, however, that the Sri Lankan government was able to establish peace within the country again. In this context, the researcher examines why success eluded Sri Lanka until the final phase of the campaign, since the same principles (COIN) were followed in all battles.

Eelam War (Phase IV) featured important changes to the Sri Lankan government's COIN strategy. These changes included transforming the population by making them part of the solution. This was accomplished through a grass roots movement that motivated, edified, and increased confidence within local communities. Also, military operations were scaled down to small teams, which facilitated greater flexibility in target acquisition, intelligence collection on the target by ground troops (HUMINT), and manoeuvrability of larger forces to advance and occupy the area with fewer casualties and less damage to equipment. In addition, infusion of technology and a coordinated internal and external intelligence network enabled the Sri Lankan government to restrict external support and then destroy much of the LTTE's capabilities more easily than in previous battles. Moreover, a transparent media system and a transformed political and military hierarchy working together were able to garner greater

military professionalism, public support, and accomplish mission objectives by sharing information and motivating society to join the military—as well as to provide humanitarian needs to the affected Tamil population. Lastly, an independent government was able to gain support from allies other than traditional Western allies by strengthening diplomatic and economic relationships.

I will explore to what extent these changes made a difference in the outcome by comparing their presence or absence in the first three phases of Sri Lanka's COIN strategy. This thesis assumes that the critical differences between Phase IV and the three previous phases relates to COIN strategy, not to the behaviour of the LTTE insurgent group.

D. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review provided in this section presents the basis for this dissertation regarding publications on the success of counterinsurgency strategies of Sri Lanka's Phase IV operation against the LTTE.

Counterinsurgency (COIN) strategies are defined as measures that are taken by the government to combat the rebel groups. Such measures are comprised of political, psychological, economic, civic and military activities, which are formulated to suppress or conquer the insurgent groups.³ David Galula explains that counterinsurgency or (COIN) strategies are politically activated campaigns which exploit all the elements of the country in order to eradicate the insurgent group.⁴ Although, combating insurgent groups requires military resources to counteract, certain non-military resources should also be used to counterbalance. These non-military strategies include re-establishing the local authority, reforming economy, or development of infrastructure.⁵ Although combating insurgent groups through military resources is more direct, certain non-military resources focus on the civilians so that the country's legitimacy can be

³ U.S. Army, Field Manual 3-24: Counter Insurgency, 1-1.

⁴ David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (PSI Classics of the Counterinsurgency Era) (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2006), 62-63.

⁵ Ibid., 63.

enhanced and the support for the insurgent groups can be reduced.⁶ The insurgent groups and the counterinsurgency strategies combat in order to win the hearts and minds of the civilians.⁷

On any given level, an international outlook will prove that countries that are not hostile are also not in harmony.⁸ The purpose of this literature review is to discuss the reasons behind the appearance of insurgent movement in few countries of the world and understand the complexities behind these insurgencies. There are numerous definitions regarding counterinsurgency or (COIN) strategies that do not involve war.⁹ Furthermore, these definitions enable us to comprehend the need to expand the involvement of public communities—and involve professional, religious, and academic institutions—as players in a domestic conflict.¹⁰

The above-mentioned literature excerpts are presented to discuss the background of the insurgency conflict: the beginning, the phases of domestic conflicts and its escalation. It also discusses the correct measures that can be implemented to manage, control and avoid further conflict. This discussion will help provide the knowledge about counterbalancing measures and support a comparison of their strengths and weaknesses against all the types of domestic conflict, including terrorism.

Stephan Biddle is a strategist who explains that counteracting measures present the methods in which radical changes in the administration and public structure can diminish terror levels.¹¹ He further explains the ways in which states should formulate their strategies and consider various aspects such as strengths and weaknesses,

⁶ U.S. Army, Field Manual 3–24: Counter Insurgency, 1–1.

⁷ Bard O’Neil, *Insurgency and Terrorism: From Revolution to Apocalypse* (Washington, D.C: Potomac Books Inc., 2nd ed., 2005), 169.

⁸ *Counter Insurgency Operations: AFM Vol (B)* (Colombo, Sri Lanka: Defense Services Command and Staff Collage, 2005), iv–v.

⁹ *Counter Insurgency Operations* (Silhert, Bangladesh: School of Infantry and Tactics, Special Warfare Wing, 1998), 1–4.

¹⁰ Bruce Schneier, *Beyond Fear: Thinking Sensibly about Security in an Uncertain World* (New York: Copernicus Books, 2003), 12–99. Explains how those actors involvement in internal security as well as internal onlicts.

¹¹ Daniel L. Byman, *The Five Front War: The Better Way to Fight Global Jihad* (Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wily & Sons, 2008), 52–82.

implications, and so forth. The strategic and tactical measures utilized by the government to counteract are far and varied. They vary from hard-core measures like creating anti-terrorism law and empowering the judiciary system, to less noticeable measures like the establishment of automated banks for data and boosting intelligence capacities and secret measures.¹²

The counterinsurgency or (COIN) publications explain that for more than 100 years, the British government was involved in insurgent operations of various kinds. Thus, with this vast knowledge of combating insurgent groups, it has evolved a doctrine of counterinsurgency strategies.¹³ The COIN publications explain that the current counterinsurgency guidelines, principles and strategies were actually based on three-decades-old British experiences. It included political dominance, political objective, synchronized government and administration, intelligence services, separation of support for insurgent groups, counterbalancing the insurgent groups and long-run planning for post insurgency.¹⁴ The military and other armed services were pre-occupied with various manoeuvres other than war. They explained that the military and other armed services believed that there was little or no pressure to revise measures used to counterbalance because there was little indication of a requirement for change.¹⁵

The text from the Sri Lanka's Defense Services Command and Staff College states that certain measures or strategies, which were applied successfully in past, were not feasible for Sri Lanka's situation.¹⁶ The past studies also indicate that there was a severe need for a publication that identifies new strategies and principles which could be applied in the future.

¹² Bruce Hoffman and Jennifer Morrison Taw, *A Strategic Framework for Counter Terrorism and Insurgency* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1992), 44.

¹³ *Counter Insurgency Operations: AFM Vol (B)* (Colombo, Sri Lanka: Defense Services Command and Staff Collage, Sri Lanka, 2005), i.

¹⁴ Ibid., 1–2.

¹⁵ Frank Kitson, *Low Intensity Operations: Subversion, Insurgency, Peacekeeping* (Harrisburg, PA: Stackpol Books, 1st ed., 1971), 208.

¹⁶ *Counter Insurgency Operations: AFM Vol (B)* (Colombo, Sri Lanka: Defense Services Command and Staff Collage, Sri Lanka, 2005), 1–2.

John Nagal constructed a learning framework for military and armed forces in order to scrutinize the effectiveness of American and British counterinsurgency (COIN) measures.¹⁷ This model involved the application of the lessons learned and their adoption in active combat situations. The Malayan crisis started in June 1948 and was ended by the British military and armed forces in December 1951. This emergency provided the groundwork for current counterinsurgency (COIN) strategies.¹⁸ The outcomes of this emergency were analysed and the lessons, which were learned during the entire COIN strategy, were used for later operations.

The text presents logical motives for the formulation of strategies, as well as motives for the revision or rejection of some strategies. However, certain publication regarding the conflicts in Northern Ireland, Kenya, Malaya, and Cyprus—and the counterbalancing operations of Rhodesia, Italy, Vietnam and Germany—exposed issues in past strategies used for counterbalancing insurgent groups. This literature shows that there is a severe need for the formulation of new strategies and their development and implementation. It is also necessary to consider the outcomes, experiences, and lessons which were learned from those operations for the comprehensive development and logical countrywide counterinsurgency scheme.¹⁹ Since 9/11, after so many years of war against terrorism and U.S. and NATO armed forces combating the Taliban, the U.S. and NATO armed forces still have not achieved complete control of Afghanistan.²⁰ This ongoing 11-year battle proves that the techniques used in the past are no longer applicable in today's world. In the case of the Afghan Taliban, the forces must use different measures and strategies to combat this domestic conflict because of the involvement of national as well as international forces.

¹⁷ Raymond A. Millen, *Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam: Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife*, The CBS Interactive Business Network, 2004, accessed February 11, 2011, http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0IBR/is_3_34/ai_n6214951/.

¹⁸ John Coats, *Suppressing Insurgency* (San Francisco, CA: Oxford, Westview Press, 1992), 223.

¹⁹ Hoffman and Taw, *A Strategic Framework for Counter Terrorism and Insurgency*; REUTERS. *Can America win in Afghanistan?* Reuters, May 25, 2010, accessed August 29, 2011, from <http://blogs.reuters.com/afghanistan/2010/05/25/can-america-win-in-af->, 1–3.

²⁰ Center for a New American Security, *Developing Strong, Pragmatic and Principled National Security and Defense Policies: Afghanistan and Pakistan*, 2008–2011, accessed August 29, 2011, from <http://www.cnas.org/afghanistan?gclid=C17tiOnm9aoCFWUZQgodDGbBlw>, 1–2.

During the first three stages of Sri Lanka's 26 years of internal conflict, "government and security forces, with the support and assistance of other nations, fought to eradicate terrorism" by implementing previously formulated counterinsurgency principles.²¹ In 2007, new strategies were developed (focusing on "diplomacy, tactical and operational manoeuvres, intelligence, use of technology, media and propaganda, political aim and will, [gaining] population support, humanitarian" aspects, and others).²² By taking a closer look at the counterinsurgency principles that were based on past experience, and by addressing all four COIN stages (preparatory phase, active resistance phase, insurgency phase, and open offensive phase) of internal conflict simultaneously,²³ the LTTE was defeated.

Some "governments have paid attention to [gaining] popular support through winning the hearts and minds of the people."²⁴ However, while this tactic contributed to the success of the fourth phase of the Sri Lankan campaign, it was overlooked in the literature as one of the principles of improved counterinsurgency techniques employed by Sri Lanka.²⁵

Current counterinsurgency principles indicate that force ratios for any battle against insurgents should be six or more to one.²⁶ Today, we are learning that application of such a force ratio may create increased target opportunities for insurgents or may lead to violation of the Geneva Convention because insurgents tend to fight using civilians as

²¹ L. H. M. Mendis, *Assignment Peace in the Name of the Motherland: Eelam War I, IPKF Operations, Eelam War II, Eelam War III, and the Undeclared Eelam War IV* (Colombo, Western, 2009), 66.

²² Hoffman and Taw, *A Strategic Framework for Counter Terrorism and Insurgency: Can America win in Afghanistan?* Reuters, May 25, 2010, accessed August 30, 2011, from <http://blogs.reuters.com/afghanistan/2010/05/25/can-america-win-in-af>.

²³ *Counter Insurgency Operations, AFM Vol (B)* (Silhert, Bangladesh: School of Infantry and Tactics, Special Warfare Wing, Bangladesh, 1998), 4–6.

²⁴ Sam C. Sarkesian and John Allen Williams, *Unconventional Conflicts in a New Security Era: Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1993), 334.

²⁵ Media Center Sri Lanka, *Media Center for National Development for Sri Lanka*, August 18, 2010. Accessed March 05, 2011. <http://www.development.lk/news.php?news=786>, 1A.

²⁶ *Counter Insurgency Operations: AFM Vol (B)* (Colombo, Sri Lanka: Defense Services Command and Staff Collage, Sri Lanka, 2005), 89.

shields for their protection.²⁷ Improved technology provides an even further increase in force ratio, which includes both men and materials, and this technology employment has created even more targets for insurgents. Although much has been written about the failures and victories of battles, nowhere is the excessive use of manpower discussed.²⁸ Further, this excessive manpower is never discussed as contributing to heavy casualty figures.

The literature reviewed argues how lessons learned effectively and progressively have been (and are) applied during subsequent wars. Most of the literature saw that after identifying COIN principles, no further studies have been conducted to shape the policies to make them relevant to present-day contemporary conflicts. The reshaping of any principle should be universal, allowing its application to be relevant to the scenario of any internal conflict. At present, existing strategies and countermeasures are either not contemporary, or are very old, or are systematically changed from combat to combat—but they are not firm.²⁹ Hence it is required to study and identify whether they are appropriate to present-day internal conflict or whether they need to be refined. Researchers have attempted to find answers for the questions that arose as gaps in literature by researching what role the then-prevailing counterinsurgency principles played in the Sri Lankan defeat of the LTTE. Such findings, with applicable alterations and modifications, could be recommended for the future application of counterinsurgency principles, to be used before any internal conflict gets to an insurgency stage.

E. METHODS AND SOURCES

A combination of the study of literature and other available information, as well as personal Sri Lankan Armed Forces experience, will be used to test this hypothesis. The information garnered from these resources will be applied to each battle in the Sri Lankan

²⁷ V. K. Shashikumar, "Russia's Atomic Proposal on Table: Iran," IBN Live, April 26, 2009, accessed December 05, 2011, from <http://ibnlive.in.com/news/cornered-lte-useing-civilians-as-human-shield/9116-2.html>, 2.

²⁸ Mari-Jana "M-J" Oboeroceanu, Anne Leland, *Congressional Research Service*, Defense Manpower Data Center, February 26, 2010, accessed March 05, 2011, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/netsec/RL32492.pdf>, 1–2.

²⁹ Ibid.; Byman, *The Five Front War*, 81–82.

campaign in relation to counterinsurgency principles, for the purpose of identifying whether the strategies applied in Eelam War IV had covered all the principles or whether anything was missed, needed to be refined or revised, or be identified as an additional principle adopted for the success of Eelam War IV. The research will be conducted based on content obtained from secondary sources, including historical analysis and informational articles found in libraries, training establishments, and the Internet. Since no research studies or books have been published on the post-2009 Sri Lankan conflict, I will review operation-completion reports in order to find claims and lessons learned from the operation. The study will also utilize the author's own experience as a member of the Sri Lankan Armed Forces.

F. THESIS OVERVIEW

This study focuses on completely relevant issue of the rise of insurgent groups, which the world has witnessed after the World War II. These asymmetric wars are generally quite expensive, prolonged, complicated and typically involve domestic or international powers which have significant interest in the resolution of the conflict. These wars are strikingly violent and most times, quite outraging—they leave many civilians dead or missing, and cause economic instability and the lack of government control.

Nowadays, these rebel insurgencies are found in numerous countries across the continents. India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan are some of the most well-known examples. Thus, there is no doubt that these rebel insurgencies are and will carry on posing significant challenges to domestic and international policies for many countries.

For counterinsurgents, the strategy of seizing the enemy intellectually and understanding how to beat them and succeed in the implementation of the strategies that are necessary is quite chaotic and time consuming. T.E. Lawrence explains this process as “eating soup with a knife.”³⁰ Although, the process of examining the past counterinsurgency (COIN) strategies to analyse the major elements, which helped in

³⁰ John A. Nagal, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam*, accessed August 31, 2011, from <http://www.press.uchicago.edu/Misc/Chicago/567702.html>.

explaining the failure or victory of the counterinsurgency (COIN) principles, is vital, it is also crucial to extract the key lessons learned during the past domestic conflicts to devise more effective future strategies for counterinsurgency (COIN). This could be explained as the “spoon for eating soup.”

As such, it is fundamental to study past COIN battles in order to decide what features best elucidate the success or failure of an irregular force. Obtaining lessons learned from past combats may help future counterinsurgents techniques better, more efficient strategies.

While this study on Sri Lanka will not give out exact proposals on how to conduct a COIN battle, it will be an addition to the COIN literature that policy makers to conduct further studies in order to improve COIN strategies.

Chapter I is the introductory chapter and will primarily consist of this research proposal document along with defining some other pertinent concepts in regards to COIN methodology and theory. Chapter II deals with the historical background of the conflict, in particular the causative factors for the Eelam Wars, as well as an overview of the four main phases of this struggle. The Sri Lankan government’s application of COIN strategies in relation to their national objectives during each battle will be discussed in Chapter III. Chapter IV will include findings and discussion related to the study. Chapter V will present a comprehensive conclusion along with a series of recommendations for future COIN campaigns that may assist other government agencies by providing them with the summarized findings and lessons learned in this thesis.

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II. BACKGROUND OF THE SRI LANKAN CONFLICT

A. ORIGIN OF THE CONFLICT

The background to the LTTE insurgency depicts a historical trend in the Sri Lankan government's dealings with the Tamil minority population since the British left. This trend began with an assertion of Sinhalese political power and concurrent marginalization of Tamil groups. This marginalization continued and worsened, ending with devastating ethnic conflict facilitated in part by the Sinhalese-dominated Sri Lankan government. The effect of this trend was a Tamil Diaspora that escaped the country under extremely violent conditions. This Diaspora not only blamed Colombo for the violence, but came to accept the LTTE as the protectors of Tamil interests in Sri Lanka.³¹ In the early twentieth century, the Sinhalese community started a nationalist movement demanding an independent nation. The British granted them independence in 1948 after peaceful negotiations. Immediately after the independence, while drafting the first constitution, the disagreements between Sinhalese and Tamil ethnic communities began to surface. After Ceylon was granted independence from Britain, many Tamils and academics argued that the Sinhalese majority quickly asserted itself on the island and began to re-shape the political environment in its favour. There were several reasons for this political assertion. Some authors point to the Sinhalese as suffering from a "Double Minority Complex," meaning that the Sinhalese majority in Sri Lanka actually considers itself a minority. This is because it perceives that the 60+ million Tamils living in the state of Tamil Nadu-India are part of the calculation. Others claim that the British rulers purposefully disempowered the Buddhist Sangha, or religious order, within the Sinhalese community in order to gain political advantage and to facilitate the establishment of favoured Christian institutions. After independence, the Sangha then quickly began to mobilize the majority Sinhalese population, making up for lost time and correcting what they had believed to be the Western and/or Tamil-influenced social ills that had

³¹ Lionel Beehner, "What Sri Lanka Can Teach Us About COIN," *Small Wars Journal* (August 27, 2010), <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/what-sri-lanka-can-teach-us-about-coin> (accessed August 14, 2011).

permeated under British rule.³² Others also assert that the political structures of Sri Lanka, especially the structures that were created directly after independence, allowed for the Sangha to mobilize the masses so easily. These academics point to several works and political documents to support this point: the Buddhist Committee of Inquiry's *The Betrayal of Buddhism*, and its effects on the elections of 1956; The Sinhala Only Act, which banned the Tamil language from official use; and the constitutional reforms of 1972, which recognized Sinhala as the official language of Sri Lanka and declared Buddhism as having a primary place over other religions. Each of these is an example of Sinhalese political mobilization, and the concurrent disenfranchisement of the Tamil populations during the first few decades of Sri Lankan statehood. In these early days of Sinhalese political mobilization, Tamils' counter-actions involved political rallies and peaceful protests aimed at political re-integration within the Sri Lankan state. These non-violent measures were answered by Sinhalese rioting against the Sri Lankan Tamil populations, and additional political actions that heightened tensions.³³

The riots of 1956 and 1958 are mentioned above; however, several others occurred in 1961, 1974, 1977, 1979, and in 1981. Furthermore, a large body of evidence suggests that over time, Sri Lankan government forces allowed these riots to take place. For example, riots in 1977 occurred after the Tamil United Liberation Front had won an overwhelming majority of Tamil votes based on a campaign pledge to achieve a separate state of Tamil Eelam within the federal structure. The TULF further articulated this stance by publishing what is known as the "Vaddukoddai Resolution." Despite their stated intention to create a separate Tamil state, the TULF at the time was still willing to achieve its desired ends peacefully and institutionally. The ensuing violence, perpetrated in part by Sri Lankan police, was officially blamed on the victims by the presidentially

³² Peter Chalk, "Commentary no. 77: Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam's (LTTE) International Organization and Operations; A Preliminary Analysis," Canadian Security Intelligence Service, March 17, 2000, 7.

³³ De Silva Ranasinghe, "Defeat of the LTTE and its Significance," *Asia Defense News* 5 (May–June 2009), 12–13.

appointed investigator. This claim by the investigator validated and condoned the ethnically charged violence exacted upon the Tamil victims by Sinhalese mobs that were being led in part by Sri Lankan police.

In 1979, the Sinhalese majority in Parliament, under the leadership of President Jayawardene, passed the Prevention of Terrorism Act in response to the fledgling (and not universally accepted) Tamil separatist movement that was slowly emerging in the Tamil-dominated North. The Act allowed the police and military broad powers of arrest and detainment without trial or evidence. Reports indicate that indiscriminate incarceration and torture ensued. The Act was intended to coerce this fledgling insurgent movement into demobilization yet, in reality, had the opposite effect. Furthermore, this Act allowed for police to conduct extra-judicial killings in response to attacks against police officers. These killings facilitated the next series of ethnic riots in 1981. Although the riots were caused by several factors, one stands out in particular. While responding to crowd violence during election campaign rallies in Tamil dominated areas, several Sinhalese police officers were killed. In retribution, police and Sinhalese groups throughout Sri Lanka went on a rampage, not only killing innocent Tamils and burning homes, but allegedly attempting to destroy Tamil heritage sites by burning the public library in Jaffna, which included original, and thereby irreplaceable, Tamil manuscripts. In a surprising note of candour, the Sri Lankan president fully admitted that members of his own party had instigated some of the violence committed against Tamils during these riots.

The history of the political relationship between the two communities in the post-colonial phase shows a growing trend where Sinhalese political mobilization and ethnic empowerment at the ballot box led to a concurrent disenfranchisement of the Tamil population in Sri Lanka. Further, attempts over time to resolve many Tamils as futile saw the divisiveness by existing Tamil political groups. Tamil civil disobedience, peaceful in its intentions yet deadly in its outcome, was the result. The violent response by the state to the exercising of Tamil rights within Sri Lankan democracy further alienated many ethnic Tamils. This created a small but tight-knit youth movement that became convinced of militancy, and separation from the state, as the only way to protect Tamils. Above all,

clearly, the Sri Lankan government agents had, over time, become more involved in the riots. This solidified the perception among more and more Tamils that the Sri Lankan state was not only disingenuous, but also overtly violent toward Tamils. The largest and most damaging riot came in 1983, which signalled not only the apex of anti-Tamil ethnic violence to date, but radicalized many Tamils against the Sri Lankan state. Furthermore, the international Tamil Diaspora, which grew because of the increasing violence and disenfranchisement, became a main player in supporting the insurgency.

The riots of 1983, described by one scholar as an “Orgy of Violence,” were implemented and organized by Sri Lankan state authorities. This is similar to previous rioting to date, yet far greater in scale. Most accounts describe the riots as a Sinhalese reaction to the death of 13 Sri Lankan soldiers, who were killed in an ambush in northern Sri Lanka by the fledgling Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). From July 24 to August 5, Sinhalese mobs attacked and destroyed Tamil businesses, killed Tamils and burned homes. The reported death toll varies widely dependent upon the source, with numbers anywhere from 350–2000 killed. Despite their origin in Colombo, the riots eventually spread as far as Trincomolee. Sinhalese mobs reportedly had voter registration lists with complete addresses of Tamils’ residences, businesses and numbers of family members. Allegedly, members of the government provided these lists to the organized mobs. Another important detail of these riots was the active participation of the Sri Lankan armed forces and military. There are numerous reports that members of the Sri Lankan Armed Forces and police not only directed the riots but actively participated in them. The after effects of the riots were also devastating.³⁴ The number of refugees was estimated at 80,000–100,000 in the Colombo area alone. The formation of camps to house the refugees created long-term suffering, as these Tamils had nowhere to turn because their entire livelihoods had been destroyed.

As a direct result of these atrocities committed against Tamils throughout Sri Lanka, a large number fled the island, and established themselves in India, Australia,

³⁴ Christine Fair, “Diaspora Involvement in Insurgencies: Insights from the Khalistan and Tamil Eelam Movements,” *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, 11 (2005), 125–156.

Canada, the United States, the UK, and many other Western European countries.³⁵ In fact, according to some estimates, approximately one-quarter of all Sri Lankan Tamils presently live abroad. This equates to approximately 600,000 to 800,000 Sri Lankan Tamils spread throughout over 40 different countries, with the largest concentrations in Canada and the UK. In Toronto alone, the Tamil population is larger than the Tamil population in any city within Sri Lanka. Although the history of ethnic rioting in post-independence Sri Lanka began as a series of legislative measures that the Tamil community perceived to be antithetical to Tamil interests, Sinhalese and Sri Lankan government reactions to Tamil grievances eventually sparked widespread violence that physically and emotionally destroyed Tamil communities. Arguably, the Diaspora has never forgotten this tragedy.³⁶ Since 1983, Tamil Diaspora living in Western countries has become a political and economic force. Estimates indicate that, in recent years, the Diaspora raised and supplied 200–300 million USD annually to the Tamil insurgency. As of 2000, these funds provided the LTTE with over 80 percent of its annual budget. During the insurgency, the Diaspora funds allowed the LTTE to acquire high-tech weaponry and were allegedly used to curry political favour from Western politicians.³⁷

Several important inferences can be made in reference to the background of the Sri Lankan conflict. First, the Diasporas' last real memory was the widespread violence exacted upon them by the Sinhalese, and a Sri Lankan government that was, at best, incapable of stopping the violence or, at worst, contributing in the activity. Second, Tamil political organizations did not initially envision the idea of a separate state. Instead, they desired greater inclusion and enfranchisement in the early days of Sri Lanka. However, as a product of the aforementioned actions, the voices calling for the formation of Tamil Eelam espoused in the body of the militant Tamil youth organizations became louder than the ones calling for peaceful reconciliation. Of course, the activities of the Sri Lankan government perpetuated this shift. Yet, that does not mean that moderate voices

³⁵ Neil De Votta, *Blowback Linguistic Nationalism, Institutional Decay, and Ethnic Conflict in Sri Lanka* (Stanford University Press, 2004), 60–89.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Edgarm O'Balance, *The Cyanide War: Tamil Insurrection in Sri Lanka* (United Kingdom: Brasse'ys, 1990), 22.

were not available, they simply were drowned out by the sounds of Sinhalese mobs and the cries for war and revenge by Tamil youth. Interestingly enough, the perception of the conditions surrounding the plight of so many within the Diaspora allowed for the LTTE to continually rely upon Diaspora support, not only monetarily, but for political assistance as well. At the time of the 1983 riots, the LTTE had suddenly become the “avenging saviours” of disaffected Tamils.

Immediately following the 1983 riots, the LTTE had no problem finding recruits, as many Tamils who did not flee with the Diaspora volunteered after witnessing the atrocities committed against them. With notable exceptions, a combination of LTTE “salesmanship,” coupled with the geographic separation of the Diaspora from everyday events in northern Sri Lanka, has allowed this perception largely to remain within the Diaspora, facilitating the continual flow of funding and political support. This Diaspora left behind family members and a homeland embroiled in civil war, fought between the Sinhalese-dominated Sri Lankan government and many small Tamil insurgent groups. Arguably the most famous of which, and eventually the largest, was the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

After the IPKF pull out in 1990, the LTTE developed into a fearsome insurgency. Using the funding provided by the Diaspora, they rose in number and notoriety. They controlled large areas in northern Sri Lanka. Subsequent operations by the Sri Lankan military during the 1990s and early 2000s were typically met with disaster as the LTTE continually outmanoeuvred them on land, sea, and air. Mullaitivu provides an example of such clashes in which the LTTE showed an upper hand. In the Battle of Unceasing Waves, the LTTE force of approximately 3000–4000 overran a Sri Lankan Army Brigade camp, which was supported by 122 mm artillery and 120 mm mortars. The result was at least 1520 Sri Lankan military dead; with the artillery and heavy mortars captured.” The LTTE is also credited with the development and implementation of the individually carried suicide vest, which they used to target not only political opponents such as Rajiv Gandhi and Sri Lankan Presidents Premadasa and Kumaratunga, but also other Tamil resistance groups. The technology and explosives required to develop such intricate operations and deadly devices derive from the Diaspora’s funding structures.

Yet despite their successes and wealth, the LTTE eventually came to an end. In May of 2009, after a two-and-a-half year military offensive, the Sri Lankan Armed Forces surrounded the last of the insurgents as they attempted a desperate last stand, ironically enough, on the beaches in Mullaitivu. The LTTE was once a unit of over 10,000 battle-hardened guerrillas. However, the remnants that attempted this act of desperation consisted of many conscripted young children, who held civilians as human shields. Meanwhile, their core leadership made desperate calls from their makeshift bunkers for American or British protection upon surrender. Arguably, they were only a shell of what was once considered to be one of the most feared insurgent movements of the modern age. This last stand resulted in the death and capture of the last of the holdouts. As proof of the insurgency's demise, a photo of LTTE leader Vellupillai Prabhakaran was released, with a bullet hole in his forehead. Selvarasa Pathmanathan, the head of the LTTE's international diplomatic relations committee, released the following statement: "we have already announced to the world our position to silence our guns to save our people."³⁸ With that statement, the Tamil Tigers admitted to a military defeat and the longest-running war in South Asia came to an end.

B. BATTLES OF EELAM WAR

1. Eelam War I

The Eelam war I initiated in October 1981, when one armed officer was killed in Jaffna. Over time, the Liberation Tamil Tigers of Eelam (LTTE) continued creating havoc under the authority of Veupillai Prabhakaran during the elections on 1983. They used package bombs for panicking civilians.³⁹ Many people were displaced in the riots caused by this havoc, which resulted in thousands of Muslims and Sinhalese being forced to leave their houses. These riots led to an even bigger outrage on July 23, 1983, which resulted in killing 13 armed Sri Lankan officers by the Liberation Tamil Tigers of Eelam

³⁸ Scoop World, "LTTE: "We have decided to silence our guns." May 18, 2009; Press release; TamilNet. Accessed August 14, 2011. <http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/WO0905/S00279.htm>.

³⁹ Robert Irwin Rotberg, "Creating peace in Sri Lanka: Civil War and Reconciliation," World Peace Foundation Study, 1999, 71–74.

(LTTE).⁴⁰ An even larger riot exploded throughout the state, particularly in the eastern and northern parts of Sri Lanka. These riots had severe consequences at an international level. Huge numbers of Sri Lankan Tamils fled the country and sought refuge in other countries. These civilians who fled the country later supported a new Sri Lankan state for Tamils.

On the other hand, the Tamil insurgents expanded their rebellious actions, to which the government responded by doubling the counterbalancing strategy. Around 200 military campsites were set up in the East, North and Wanni area in order to achieve the objective. In the meantime, the Liberation Tamil Tigers of Eelam (LTTE) also started the tactic of kidnapping government and administrative officers, alongside other rebellious activities like mass murdering the border villagers of Sinhalese. The Tamil Tigers then opted toward guerrilla warfare tactics and attempted to attack the Batticalo jail to protect their leaders. The neighbouring friendly nations helped them by providing military gear and gadgets and funding and providing combative training. In the meantime, the Liberation Tamil Tigers of Eelam (LTTE) carried on their violent tactics to achieve militant dominance in the area over other rebel groups such as the Tamil National Alliance (TNA), Peoples Liberation of Tamil Eelam (PLOT), and Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO), etc. The heads of other militant groups, such as Sabarathnam, were murdered, and a majority of the members of Sabarathnam left Sri Lanka to find refuge in India.

The government's expenditure on defense inclined. In order to reclaim control of the Vadamarachchi region in the peninsula of Jaffna, the government initiated the "Operation Liberation" which was targeted towards forcing the Tamil Tigers to start re-negotiating over the peace talks that initially took place in Bhutan but did not achieve the desired results and disintegrated before the Operation Liberation. In the early hours of May 26, 1987, history was made when Sri Lanka launched two brigades in an offensive manoeuvre, which was commanded by the late Maj Gen Vijaya Wimalaratne and Lt General Denzil Kobbekaduwa. The taskforces were successful to finish the assigned

⁴⁰ Narayanam R. Swamy, *The Tiger Vanquished: LTTE's Story* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2010), chapter 1.

mission in five days. This operation helped the military forces to reclaim the control of Vadamarachchi area. This incident proved to be a brutal setback for the Tamil Tigers. The situation for Tamil Tigers became even worse when the military forces reclaimed control of Velvetithurai area that was the hometown of much admired LTTE leader V. Prabhakaran. Vadamarachchi was also hometown for other respected and senior leaders of LTTE. The intervention of India in this conflict put extra pressure on the Sri Lankan government; therefore, the Sri Lankan government had to terminate the operation against the Tamil militants. Thousands of Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) landed in Sri Lanka to help with the conflict as per the peace accord of 1987, which was between India and Sri Lanka.

2. Eelam War II

The attempt of the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) to neutralize the Tamil Tiger failed. As soon as the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) left the country, the Tamil Tigers got hold of the northern and eastern areas of the country. Government again made sufficient efforts to hold peace talks with the LTTE, which did not result as anticipated. The small operations later became fully blown war. The LTTE often viciously targeted and murdered the police. The Tamil Tigers murdered approximately 600 police officers and the task forces in the northern areas were targeted and kidnapped.⁴¹ Another mission, “Operation Eagle” was carried out by the Air Force of Sri Lanka, as a rescue mission to release the kidnapped officers in Jaffna Fort. The ever-inclining pressure in the combat zone, the government needed to launch a full-scale counterinsurgency (COIN) campaign to defeat the Tamil Tigers. Only a few military bases of Sri Lankan Military forces were forced to pull out since they lacked sufficient number of troops. These bases were Kokavil, Mankulam, Thalaimannar and Kondachchie. Due to lack of sufficient routes by land, the Sri Lankan Army heavily relied on the Air Force for the fortifications and battle equipment. The Palaly airstrip was directly under the striking range of Tamil Tigers. However, the brave and resolute Sri Lankan Air Force pilots brought fortifications and battle equipment despite being under

⁴¹ Deborah Winslow and Michael D. Woost, *Economy, Culture, and Civil War in Sri Lanka* (Bloomington IN: University of Indiana Press, 2004), 71–73.

the heavy fire from the Tamil Tigers. The expansion of the Palaly campsite was carried out under Operation Jayashakti. The main purpose of this expansion was to provide the smooth landing of Air Force planes outside of the striking range of the Tamil Tigers.⁴²

The Tamil Tigers further thrived with the help of international funding and endorsements—which sustained their kidnapping and murdering of innocent people. Kathankudi, Paliyagodella and Eravour massacres are horrifying examples of Tamil Tiger's brutality. The Tamil Diaspora made Europeans believe that the Tamil Tigers are just in their actions.⁴³ Meanwhile, the Tamil Tigers expanded their weapons and battle equipment to commence major militant operations to achieve their objectives. They also commenced marine attacks on military and armed forces base camps alongside the land troops. Together the sea and land troops attacked and seized the Mulaithive base and captured all the weapons and equipment and murdered the soldiers who were at the brigade. The Mulaithive base massacre was the largest military massacre conducted by the Tamil Tigers.

3. Eelam War III

By the year 1994, the negotiations with the Tamil Tigers started once again when the recently-elected administration took office. However, like previous attempts, it failed again due to unfair demands of the Tamil Tigers. These unreasonable and unfair demands led to the termination of numerous operations which were being conducted against the LTTE. The Military Forces of Sri Lanka re-captured Jaffna from LTTE after the peace talks were failed. After a long period of 12 years, on December 2, 1995, the town of Jaffna was declared under control of the military forces. The city of Jaffna was conquered with minimal property damage. However, the Tamil Tigers managed to strip away all the functioning objects and equipment from the Teaching Hospital of Jaffna.

The North region of Jaffna was not connected the South region of Jaffna due to lack of manpower in the Sri Lankan military. The Tamil Tigers developed their capabilities by launching suicide attacks under water. Through this, the LTTE targeted

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ranasinghe, "Defeat of the LTTE and its Significance," 13–14.

and destroyed numerous navy boats of Sri Lanka. The LTTE also developed their capabilities in air missile launches. This helped them shoot down many aircraft and helicopters of Sri Lankan Air Force. By taking numerous measures, the LTTE was again able to recapture certain regions, which were previously reclaimed by the Sri Lankan government under the Jayasekuru operation. These regions included the Elephant pass and Kilinochchi. The LTTE also attacked Bandaranayake Airport, Katunayake Air Force base and other major economic hubs of Sri Lanka in this period.

In February 2002, the newly elected government again attempted negotiations; however, this time the LTTE responded, which gave the LTTE enormous political recognition. Meanwhile, they were gaining immense momentum and achieved huge military power on land, air, and sea. During the peace negotiations process, the Tamil Tigers collected enormous amounts of taxation money from the innocent people who had to visit Jaffna for business and other reasons.

During this rather dormant period, the Tamil Tigers continued the most horrifying act in their militant history. In the year 2004, thanks to the unfair attitudes and treatment of Prabhakaran on the eastern cadres, the eastern commander of Tamil Tigers, Colonel Karuna, divided the LTTE with approximately 6000 cadres and supporters. The following conflict between the LTTE and Colonel Karuna's LTTE resulted in losing huge numbers of cadres and leaders. Meanwhile, the same year, the tsunami also affected the LTTE in a major way, which resulted in a major blow to the sea tiger wing and the overall LTTE.

4. Eelam War IV

All of the peace talks encountered failure due to the dishonest attitude of the LTTE. This was primarily because, throughout the war, Prabhakaran did not have any belief in the peace process and because he was so determined to succeed in obtaining Eelam through military means. The LTTE was always supportive and positive in negotiations until they uplifted their capabilities and were able to get reorganized to face the offensives of the security forces. In early 2006, peace negotiations were shadowed by bloody battles. The navy was continuously targeted by the LTTE.

In the year 2006, the Tamil Tigers of the eastern region started behaving like a real military instead of just a militant group. The Tamil Tigers regularly arrested, tortured and murdered many Tamil residents with the suspicion that they were undercover agents for the Karuna division of the LTTE. Furthermore, the Tamil Tigers shut down the Mavilaru sluice gate, which is in the Trincomalee region, in July of 2006. Due to this more than 30,000 civilians in the east region were left without the supply of water. This caused severe deprivation of fresh drinking water for the Tamils, the Muslims, and the Sinhalese—and also the rice fields, which require a huge supply of water.

The Humanitarian Operation, which was also called the Eelam War IV, was aimed at reclaiming the Mavilaru sluice gate and opening the supply of drinking water for the residents. However, this operation was delayed, and was launched in a number of phases. It was aimed to counteract the major attack at the Muhamalai by the Tamil Tigers in August of 2006. At that time, Muhamalai was the country's national front in the northern region.

After a few ferocious counterinsurgency (COIN) measures, which integrated aspects of RMAs (Revolutions In Military Affairs),⁴⁴ the military forces of Sri Lanka were successful in reclaiming Thoppigala, which was the largest active campsite of the Tamil Tigers in the eastern region. The counterinsurgency (COIN) campaign, which was carried out in the eastern region, incorporated various methods of wars such as: combined land, sea, and air operations; SIOT (Special Infantry Operation Team) units; special task forces; and marine guerrilla warfare; along with other methods. These units and task forces infiltrated deep inside the control lines of the Tamil Tigers.

The second stage of the fourth Eelam War was carried out for 18 months in the northern region of the country. It mostly focused on the Jaffna region in order to reclaim the Poonarinen Isthmus—also called the Elephant Pass and Kilinochchi—which was considered the capital of Tamil Tigers. The capturing of these regions proved to be

⁴⁴ Types of RMA are greater lethality and dispersion: non-lethality; increased volume and precision of fire, Extremely precise; Better integrative technology leading to increased efficiency and effectiveness: Information warfare; Increasing ability of smaller units to create decisive results: stand-off strikes; Greater invisibility and increased detectability: dramatically improved command, control and intelligence.

strategically significant for the military operations and resulted in the demise of Liberation Tamil Tigers of Eelam (LTTE) in January of 2009.

During this stage of the fourth Eelam War, the Armed and Military forces of Sri Lanka deployed a combined RMA strategy, which included RMA I, RMA III and RMA IV. The war inclined more towards the guerrilla methods of warfare in order to counterbalance the combined RMA strategies of Tamil Tigers. The decision of Vellupillai Prabhakaran to hold strategically significant territories proved to be the reason for the demise of Tamil Tigers. Vellupillai Prabhakaran underestimated the strength of Sri Lanka's armed forces fully capable of RMA RMA III, RMA IV strategies, and I and opted to capture strategically significant regions. David Galula, a theorist of counterinsurgency (COIN) techniques explains that lack of logistically feasible capabilities ruled out consistent defensive strategies. Brilliant counteracting techniques will always defeat flawed strategies. Vellupillai Prabhakaran failed to anticipate the strength of the superior opponent forces. He did not formulate a defense strategy and support strategy, which the militant or rebel forces require during the insurgency movements. This illustrates that his strategies were flawed and failed to foresee the need for a revised strategy.

After the operation, the few remaining Tamil Tigers were forced to retreat into the forests near Mullaittivu, a coastal settlement. These approximately 15000 fighters took along with them more than 300,000 Tamil residents, who were trapped with them.

In a final blow to the Tamil Tigers, the Sri Lankan Air force landed on the town of Mullaithivu and captured around 3,000 devoted fighters along with the Tamil residents who were merely used as human guards within a 1,000 square kilometre area. Vellupillai Prabhakaran was becoming more and more desperate as the Sri Lankan military and armed forces were closing in on him. He knew that the Tamil Diaspora of Sri Lanka is the last hope that could rescue him by pressurising the worldwide community to interfere in favour of the Tamil Tigers. The international community did just that, however, the Sri Lankan government did not give up to the international pressure of completely and rapidly shutting down the operations against the Tamil Tigers. The government of Sri

Lanka utilized dynamic diplomatic techniques and diversion techniques like the Tamil Nadu general elections and outcomes of general election in India to be broadcasted.

The foreign ministers of Great Britain and France also landed in Sri Lanka to officially plead to the Sri Lankan government to terminate the counterinsurgency operations and help release the residents who were trapped with the Tamil Tigers. A few days later, Velupillai Prabhakaran was killed and war against insurgency was almost over.⁴⁵

A few devoted Tamil Tigers were still on the loose, but it was evident that the control lines of the Tamil Tigers were shrinking as they were losing men and support. During the year 2008, in a desperate attempt, the Tamil Tigers started attacking soft targets like the buses or trains etc., which resulted in murdering hundreds of civilians.⁴⁶ In the year 2008 alone, around 250,000 Tamil civilians were evacuated and when the war ended, the number of evacuated civilians was 450,000.

Most of these evacuated civilians moved to the government campsites that were overloaded. Due to lack of hygiene, proper sanitation, food and medical equipment most of the people badly suffered. Furthermore, the Internally Displaced Personnel (IDPs) were facing severe challenges because of security concerns. Nonetheless, the Sri Lankan government provided the best of its capabilities to organise and conduct the rebuilding and resettling of the communities, whereas the COIN campaign was still in progress.

In conclusion, the Tamil Tigers in the previous campaigns always successfully repelled the humanitarian measures conducted by the Sri Lankan government. Major attacks on the military and navy base camps were repelled very effectively and successfully. The counterbalancing measures were launched to re-open the gates of Mavilaru sluice and continued until the leadership and troops of Tamil Tigers were completely eradicated. During these successful operations the Tamil Tigers were defeated because they did not anticipate the strength of the superior opponent and did not revise

⁴⁵ B. C. Tan and John Solomon, "Feeding the Tiger: How Sri Lankan Insurgents Fund their War," *Jane's Intelligence Review*, September 01, 2007; Robert Thompson, *Defeating Communist Insurgency: Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam* (New York: Pager, 2011), 56.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 50.

their strategies. They also did not anticipate the new tactics and strategies, which were adopted by the military and armed forces of Sri Lanka. After eradicating the leadership and troops of Tamil Tigers, the humanitarian operation was terminated by the Sri Lankan government on nineteenth of May in 2009. After almost 26 years, the Sri Lankan government was able to regain complete control of Sri Lanka.

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III. APPLICATION OF STRATEGIES IN RELATION TO COIN PRINCIPLES IN THE EELAM WAR

The insurgency war lasted for almost 25 years in Sri Lanka. After all these years of targeted attacks, suicide terror campaign, bombings, murder attempts of civilians and high profile government officials and famous people, the military and armed forces of Sri Lanka were finally successful to eradicate the insurgent Tamil Tigers from the country in the year 2009.⁴⁷ Ever since Sri Lanka succeed in defeating the Tamil Tigers using revised counterinsurgency (COIN) strategies, the experts are inquiring to identify the method which Sri Lankan government adapted to successfully eradicate the domestic conflict. The success of counterinsurgency (COIN) strategy adopted by Sri Lanka is a result of mixed strategies such as government legitimacy, government's external support, unity of effort, capability of reducing external support to the militant groups, intelligence, and brave and capable military forces. These asymmetric wars are generally quite expensive, prolonged, complicated and typically involve domestic or international powers which have significant interest in the resolution of the conflict. These wars are strikingly violent and most of the times, quite outraging. Most of the times these wars leave many civilians dead or missing, economic instability, and lack of government control. Nowadays, these rebel insurgencies are found in numerous countries across continents. India, Pakistan and Afghanistan are some of the most well known examples. Thus, there is no doubt that these rebel insurgencies are and will carry on posing significant challenges to domestic and international policies for many countries.

The four prolonged wars of Eelam, which were fought between the Sri Lankan government and the Tamil Tigers, give enough evidence that in situations like these the government should deploy the best counterinsurgency (COIN) measures to defeat the insurgent rebels. The first three wars of Eelam, which initiated in 1981 and lasted until 2004, were not successful because the Sri Lankan government failed to bring down the rising insurgency of the Tamil Tigers. All the previous three wars ended with peace talks

⁴⁷ Narayanam R. Swamy, *The Tiger Vanquished: LTTE's Story* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2010), xvii.

between the government and the insurgent groups. Since these peace negotiations were not successful, they resulted in a subsequent war. The fourth and final war of Eelam was successfully turned around the situation when the Sri Lankan government deployed the counterinsurgency (COIN) strategies to its full capacity. The Sri Lankan government also introduced newly formulated counterinsurgency (COIN) strategies to use all the available sources in its capacity to defeat the Tamil Tigers once and for all.⁴⁸

The brutality, never ending hostility and mass devastation, which was conducted by the Tamil Tigers, disrupted the core of the government and nation of Sri Lanka. One similar aspects that all insurgent groups use is the unconventional insurgent techniques or guerrilla warfare techniques, which includes violence, by small packs or groups of low level followers of the insurgent groups. Historically, the guerrilla war strategies have been very successful in eradicating unpopular insurgent groups because it heavily relies on the favours of the local residents for successful insurgent movements. These rebel groups use guerrilla war strategies to develop asymmetry, which is naturally involved in the domestic conflicts. The insurgents' employ hit and run strategies against the weakness of the opponents.⁴⁹

In Sri Lanka's case as well, the Tamil Tigers avoided significant engagements, improved their support for materials, and were able to gain popularity and backing from the few local residents. They made use of forests, mountainous areas, and urban and rural regions to hide their strategies and cover up their campsites. They were aimed towards disrupting the security of Sri Lankan civilians so that the residents would lose confidence in the capabilities of their government to provide public safety and stable situation to the civilians in the country. Therefore, majority of the times, the Tamil Tigers targeted on the country's infrastructure, which was assumed to have a great impact on the basic needs of humans. The infrastructure, which were a major target for the Tamil Tigers

were electricity generating plants, water reserves and filtration plants, water pumping

⁴⁸ Chris Smith, "The Eelam Endgame?" *International Affairs* 83, no. 1 (2007), 72.

⁴⁹ Marc Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 24.

plants, food supply centres, petrol or gas or other fuel supply centres, treatments plants for sewage, and country's transportation.⁵⁰

The Tamil Tigers also deployed criminal and coercive activities to disrupt public safety and security and collect funds for the activities carried out by the insurgent groups. These crimes involved, taking hostages, kidnapping, hijacking, extortion and robbery. The Tamil Tigers also attempted to attack and intimidate the equipment of national and public safety and security in order to disrupt the government activities and force it towards defensive attitude.⁵¹

As the years pass by and the ground conditions changes, the Tamil Tigers established outstanding strategic improvements. The insurgent group was always utilising innovative methods and incorporated past lessons in order to innovate and improve their strategies through continuous trial and error. However, the Sri Lankan government and its military forces were not capable of formulating new and innovative strategies to counterbalance the rising insurgency of the Tamil Tigers. The Sri Lankan government was utilising the standards procedures for counterbalancing for quite some time. Since the Tamil Tigers were gaining ground within the country in the nineties, the Tigers developed new striking targets, operating areas, and new strategies to cause devastating effects on the nation and continue establishing the insurgency.⁵² Through these measures the Tamil Tigers managed to constantly disturb the designs of the Sri Lankan government and stayed in the media headlines.

The failure of the Sri Lankan government to establish a sound and significant strategy for combating the Tamil Tigers was one of the reasons for the long life of LTTE rebel groups. One of the major reasons why Sri Lanka was unable to eradicate LTTE in its early stages was due to the international support for the rebel group. The IICT (International Institute for Counter Terrorism) explains that the international network and

⁵⁰ Rid Thomas and Thomas A. Keaney, *Understanding Counterinsurgency: Doctrine, Operations, and Challenges* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 121.

⁵¹ Ibid., 56.

⁵² Frank Kitson, *Low Intensity Operations: Subversion, Insurgency, Peacekeeping* (Harrisburg: PA: Stackpol Books, 1971), 208.

support for the Tamil Tigers was not limited to one or two countries. It spanned more than 50 countries in central Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Europe.⁵³

The primary resource of funds and income was the Tamil Diaspora, who supported the LTTE financially through various channels like forced taxation or charitable donations. However, the Tamil Diaspora also provided financial support through other channels, both legal and illegal, including: gem trading, drug smuggling, stock investments, money and real estate markets, farm operations, finance corporations, and food joints located all over the world.⁵⁴ They also acted as banks and loaned money to the Tamils for starting businesses in return for a share in their future revenues. This enormous financial machine was generating more than 80 million dollars annually. On the other hand, the Sri Lankan government was generating only eight million dollars annually for its operations. Therefore, the Tamil Tigers were capable of spending generously on innovative military equipment and propaganda. The LTTE was earning a monthly income of 385,000 U.S. dollars from UK, 650,000 U.S. dollars from Switzerland and 1,000,000 Canadian dollars from Canada.⁵⁵

Although the Sri Lankan government was able to defeat the Tamil Tigers eventually, the conflict has raised many political concerns, which is to provide solution for the grievances of the Tamil that led to the insurgency. Sri Lankan President Rajapaksa attempted to transform the features of the government and leadership entirely and employed the similar guerrilla warfare strategies that were adopted by the Tamil Tigers in the previous three wars of Eelam. The government also attempted to employ the strategies that the Tamil Tigers were using through the prolonged war, which resulted in violent streaks, along with militant propaganda and innovative guerrilla warfare strategies. The Sri Lankan government primarily focused on strategies to bring the entire nation under one umbrella by utilising the strategy of winning the hearts and minds of the nation and defeat the Tamil insurgency as a united nation.

⁵³ Fernandes Clinton, *Hot Spot Asia and Oceania* (Greenwood; annotated edition, 2008), 228.

⁵⁴ Swamy, *The Tiger Vanquished: LTTE's Story*, 178.

⁵⁵ Smith, "The Eelam Endgame?" 71–72.

A. TRANSFORMING THE POPULATION AS THE PRIMARY FOCUS

In the first Elam war, the government was unable to transform the nation because they failed to make them the part of resolving the problem. Instead the Sri Lankan government deployed the divide and rule strategy which the British used in the past. This proved to be beneficial for the Sri Lankan Tamil, who were the largest minority groups. The Tamils were introduced to the academic systems, which were established by the British, and were provided with superior treatment for employment and even positions in the government. While, Sri Lanka did not stage a revolution in opposition of the British, unlike India, however; the Sinhalese, who were the majority of the population, became aggravated with the increasing differences.⁵⁶

In the beginning, the Sinhalese nationals were furious over the British settlements; however, after the Sri Lankan independence in the year 1948, the political philosophy of Sinhalese nations became more hostile towards the colonialism and channelled its way towards the Tamil residents.⁵⁷ After the Sri Lankan independence, the country followed the parliamentary system for governance, which involves the majority communities, the Sinhalese nationals. They decided to represent the British government system, which were still followed after the independence. This caused for rise in inequity, which resulted in discrimination against the Tamils. This eventually caused the war. The Liberation Tamil Tigers of Eelam emerged from the TNT (Tamil New Tigers), the youth rebels of the Tamil Political Party and the TULF (Tamil United Liberation Front).⁵⁸ Once firmly in power after 1990, the LTTE had little to gain from realizing reintegration in the Sri Lankan government and much to gain economically and politically from the struggle to gain an independent Tamil Eelam. Yet, it was not clear that the majority of Sri Lankan Tamils, still living in northern and eastern Sri Lanka, shared this dream of an LTTE-

⁵⁶ Ranasinghe, *Defeat of the LTTE and Its Significance*, 16.

⁵⁷ Chalk, "Commentary No. 77: Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam's (LTTE) International Organization and Operations," 45–90.

⁵⁸ Ranasinghe, *Defeat of the LTTE and its Significance*, 17–18.

controlled independent Tamil state. This can be seen in the actions that the LTTE took while governing their own political space for about 20 years.⁵⁹

The Sri Lankan government failed protect legitimacy within the Tamil minorities during the second and third war. However, the discrimination against the ethnic minority continued over the years that resulted in unsuccessful attempts by the Sri Lankan government to eradicate the Tamil Tigers.⁶⁰ Some of these discriminatory actions involve, hindering representation of Tamils in the government, lack of higher education access, and limited economic and financial opportunities. In the same time, the security forces continued harassing and embarrassing the Tamils, which resulted in rage against the Sri Lankan government.⁶¹ One of these measures was the erection of more and more security checkpoints to identify Tamil Tigers from the civilians. These armed forces also checked children in Tamil majority schools in order to identify LTTE penetration and infiltration within the schools. Due to this, the Tamil civilians had to carry their IDs everywhere and regularly agree to the interrogation process regarding their daily routine. Sinhalese political mobilization and ethnic empowerment at the ballot box led to a concurrent disenfranchisement of the Tamil population in Sri Lanka. Further, attempts over time to resolve many Tamils as futile saw the divisiveness by existing Tamil political groups. Tamil civil disobedience, peaceful in its intentions yet deadly in its outcome, was the result. The violent response by the state to the exercising of Tamil rights within Sri Lankan democracy further alienated many ethnic Tamils. This created a small but tight-knit youth movement that became convinced of militancy, and separation from the state, as the only way to protect Tamils. Above all, clearly, the Sri Lankan government agents had become, over time, more involved in the riots. This solidified the perception among more and more Tamils that the Sri Lankan state was not only disingenuous, but overtly violent toward Tamils.

⁵⁹ Rich and Laqueur, *Origins of Terrorism, Psychologies, Ideologies, Theologies, States of Mind* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Centre Press, 1998), 27–35.

⁶⁰ G. H. Peiris, “Clandestine Transactions of the LTTE and the Secessionist Campaign in Sri Lanka,” *Ethnic Studies Report* 19, no. 1 (2001): 1–23.

⁶¹ Edgarm O’Balance, *The Cyanide War: Tamil Insurrection in Sri Lanka* (Brassey’s (UK) Ltd; 1990), 22.

However, in the fourth and final war, the government was able to receive sufficient support against the Tamil Tigers not just from the Sinhalese majorities but also from the minorities, including Tamils. The voters who elected President Rajapaksa believed that he was an expert politician, with authoritative presence, well-known smile and a pleasant personality. He was most often compared to the former president of U.S., Ronald Regan. When President Rajapaksa came to power in the year 2005, he promised to create a rejoiced nation with no sign of Tamil Tigers,⁶² which echoed with the voices of the devastated nation. As sureness and motivation grown, people directly helped the security forces and given very critical intelligence on LTTE activities and their locations around the country. Further, people voluntarily supported military and police by becoming surveillance teams of them (populace of the country considered themselves as a part of the military and police). People work whole day in order to support security forces to end this war as soon as possible and that was the only hope nation had. This motivational popular support and moral showed to be one of the primary features that led to defeat of the LTTE.

B. POLITICAL AND MILITARY LEADERSHIP

The first three wars of Eelam, which initiated in 1981 and lasted until 2004, were not successful because the Sri Lankan government failed to bring down the rising insurgency of the Tamil Tigers. All the previous three wars ended with peace talks between the government and the insurgent groups. During the time, the government was not able to achieve the most vital aim of the counterinsurgency strategy. First, to make sure the government is united and perceived as genuine and just by the Tamil minorities. Second, maintaining, protecting and enhancing the governance. Instead, the Sri Lankan government, which was primarily dominated by the Sinhalese, carried on its ethnic discrimination and racially prejudiced policies towards the Tamil minority. This proved to be the foundation of the 1983 violence, which resulted in increased support for the LTTE by the Tamil minority.⁶³ The Tamil community viewed this scheme as a strategy

⁶² C. Manogaran, *The Sri Lankan Tamils, Ethnicity and Identity* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994), 25–43.

⁶³ Ibid.

to weaken the Tamil concentration in the northern and eastern regions in order to amplify the dominance of Sinhalese community in all the regions of Sri Lanka.

Since the Sri Lankan government failed to properly implement tactical and strategic counterinsurgency (COIN) techniques, its attempts to diminish the LTTE hold also failed in the past wars.⁶⁴ Initially, the Sri Lankan government opted chasing the military strategy for eradicating Tamil Tigers by using standard operating procedures. Furthermore, the Sri Lankan government also faced defeat in expanding its tactics beyond the military strategies and developing international socioeconomic and political elements of counterbalancing the insurgent attacks. For instance, the government of Sri Lanka failed to provide a reasonable and alternative direction to the Tamil community, who were in the middle of the war between the Tamil Tigers and the Sri Lankan government and suffered the most. The government of Sri Lanka also failed to take drastic measures to ease the distress of the Tamil community in the northern and eastern regions. Additionally, the speed at which the counterinsurgency (COIN) strategies were executed was quite slow and insufficient to counterbalance the ever-increasing international and local threat by the Tamil Tigers.⁶⁵

Intelligence Director monitored that the police was not capable of performing such vast operations because they lack both the experience and training for this situation. The police also lacked necessary technical, financial and other aspects of the resources for these situations. However, the police had limited capabilities for the execution of even insignificant tasks like monitoring and surveillance.

The Sri Lankan government utilized all its funding to buy new and innovative military equipment such as armoured vehicles, patrolling vehicles, and aircraft, etc. from foreign countries and did not spend the resources in the Tamil regions for infrastructure

⁶⁴ Vasantha R. Ragavan, *Peace process in Sri Lanka, Challenges and Opportunities* (Chennai: East West Books, 2007), 72–93.

⁶⁵ Walter Rich and Walter Laqueur, *Origins of Terrorism, Psychologies, Ideologies, Theologies, States of Mind* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Centre Press, 1998), 27–35

rebuilding or provide relief for the Tamil civilians who managed to escape the northern and eastern regions of the country, where the battle between the Tamil Tigers and the Sri Lankan government was on-going.

Regardless of some achievements, the Sri Lankan government did not have sufficient manpower to clear eradicate the Tamil Tigers from the northern and eastern regions. For instance, around 30,000 armed officers reclaimed the Jaffna region from the Tamil Tigers during the “Jaya Sikuru operation” in 1995. However, the military started losing their foothold after 18 months and sustained heavy defeat by the Tamil Tigers.⁶⁶ Although, the Defense Minister did not declare the number of soldiers who lost their lives, but, the impact on the Sri Lankan army’s moral and strength was significant. In addition, according to Paul Harris of Jane’s Intelligence Review, as much as 20 percent (i.e. some 20,000 men and women had deserted the army).

The Amnesty plan did bring back around 5,000 military officers; however, for most of them, their stay was temporary. Due to fresh desertions, recruitment simply could not keep up.⁶⁷

In the third war of Eelam, main concern for the military forces was the inadequate manpower and effective strategy to counterbalance the attacks of Tamil Tigers.⁶⁸ Additionally, the military forces in the Jaffna region were depleting, which later resulted in enormous administrative issues such as the frequent instances of dropping-out.⁶⁹ Although, during the years 1996 and 1999, the Sri Lankan government set up 14 police stations for public, who can handle regular civil enforcement in the Jaffna region so that the burden of the military can be shared since the military forces had to face numerous challenges to seize the region without sufficient military personnel.⁷⁰ The recruitment for

⁶⁶ Rotberg, “Creating Peace in Sri Lanka: Civil War and Reconciliation,” 71–88.

⁶⁷ Ranasinghe, “Defeat of the LTTE and its Significance,” 69.

⁶⁸ Peter H. Wilson, *Revolutions in Military Affairs, 1914 to 2014: Adapting to Discontinuities in U.S. National Security Strategy*, unpublished research (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, June 2009), 44.

⁶⁹ Samuel B. Griffith, trans. *The Sun-Tzu: The Art of War* (Oxford University Press, 1963); Swamy, *The Tiger Vanquished: LTTE’s Story*, 100–276.

⁷⁰ Sebastian L.V. Gorka, and David Kilcullen, “An Actor-Centric Theory of War: Understanding the Difference between COIN and Counterinsurgency,” *JFQ Quarterly*, 1st Quarter (2011), 14–18.

the military forces was not able to meet the demands.⁷¹ The prolonged and harsh conditions of the war were the reasons for the hesitation of the civilians for joining. Those who were willing to join the military service were not well trained for the war.

Due to this, the civilians as well as Sri Lankan government, both faced overwhelming attacks by the Tamil Tigers. Perhaps the most significant attacks were the 1996 bombing of financial district of Sri Lanka in which 100 people were murdered and around 1500 were injured. Another such attack was in 1997 on the World trade centre in the Sri Lankan capital Colombo. And the most aggressive was in 1998 on the “Dalada Maligawa”, which is the nation’s most sacred temple as it is the place where the tooth of Lord Buddha is. These attacks were aimed at creating ethnic violence that was followed by the attack on Anuradhapura “Srimaha Bodiya,” another famous temple. Later the Tamil Tigers attempted to demolish more than half of the aircraft of a Sri Lankan airline in 2001. In the previous year the Tigers also infiltrated the military complex known as the Elephant Pass, which was known for its impregnability.⁷² Wars are not fought in the battlegrounds only. There are various other fronts like external support, intelligence, leadership and public support, as well as post-war measures that ensure successful implementation of COIN strategies. The shortage of unity of effort between military and governmental leadership of Sri Lanka from 1995 until 2004 resulted in defeat by the LTTE.

However, Sri Lankan President Rajapaksa, after coming into power in 2005, attempted to transform the features of the government and leadership entirely and employed the similar guerrilla warfare strategies that were adopted by the Tamil Tigers in the previous three wars of Eelam. The government also attempted to employ the strategies that the Tamil Tigers were using through the prolonged war, which resulted in violent streaks, along with militant propaganda and innovative guerrilla warfare strategies. The Sri Lankan government primarily focused on strategies to bring the entire nation under one umbrella by utilising the strategy of winning the hearts and minds of the

⁷¹ Sumantra Bose, *States, Nations, Sovereignty: Sri Lanka, India and the Tamil Eelam Movement* (New Delhi: Sage Publications Pvt. Ltd, 1994), 72–82.

⁷² Ranasinghe, “Defeat of the LTTE and Its Significance,” 12–19.

nation and defeat the Tamil insurgency as a united nation. He also collaborated with the political leaders of the Tamil community, who were discriminated by the Tamil Tigers of the northern region. He also ordered the leaders of the military and security forces to conduct counterinsurgency measures to eradicate the Tamil Tigers without politicising the war. Perhaps the most important feat achieved by his leadership was that his government did not bend to the pressures of international communities to terminate the war against the Tamil Tigers.⁷³

During the final stages of the war (2006–2009), President Rajapaksa's government was involved in constantly providing clear targets and objectives to the military and armed forces of Sri Lanka. Although the Tiger leadership in the east was not strong enough, the devoted LTTE militants fought the armed forces like conventional military and more like a rebel group, which proved to be a flawed strategy by the LTTE because they lacked sufficient manpower to conduct a conventional military attack.⁷⁴ After a few ferocious counterinsurgency (COIN) measures, which integrated aspects of RMAs (Revolutions In Military Affairs),⁷⁵ the military forces of Sri Lanka were successful to reclaim Thoppigala, which was the largest active campsite of the Tamil Tigers in the eastern region. The counterinsurgency (COIN) campaign, which was carried out in the eastern region, incorporated various methods of wars such as combined land, sea, and air operations. During Eelam war IV, the main strategy was killing or capturing the terrorists, instead of seizing more ground, because a reduction in the number of LTTE cadres automatically led to the ground being seized.

The success of the Sri Lankan government in the eastern region helped the government to reclaim around 6500 kilometre of the area and eradicate the Tamil Tigers from that region. Later, the Defence Secretary directed the Sri Lankan Air force, Navy, Police and other security forces, along with Karuna's east division, to concentrate on

⁷³ Peiris, "Clandestine Transactions of the LTTE," 11.

⁷⁴ Edgarm O'Balance, *The Cyanide War: Tamil Insurrection in Sri Lanka* (United Kingdom: Brasse'ys, 1990), 21–16.

⁷⁵ Types of RMA are Greater lethality and dispersion: non-lethality; increased volume and precision of fire, Extremely precise; Better integrative technology leading to increased efficiency and effectiveness: Information warfare; Increasing ability of smaller units to create decisive results: stand-off strikes; Greater invisibility and increased detectability: dramatically improved command, control and intelligence.

threatening campaign in the northern region. In the fall of 2007, when the Wanni movement was rising, the Tamil Tigers fell short of human and financial resources and were facing enormous challenges to continue responding to the government COIN strategies.⁷⁶ There were additional efforts undertaken to target this golden goose. For most of the 1980s and 1990s, the LTTE gained funding, political favour, held rallies, and enjoyed being viewed as a legitimate freedom movement. This was due to the efforts of the Tamil Diaspora that saw the LTTE as an extension of their desires for justice in Sri Lanka. It was only after the events of 9/11 that other countries with large Sri Lankan Tamil Diaspora populations took any action against curtailing the fundraising activities of the group. However, once started, these activities increased in number.⁷⁷ In 2001, Great Britain and Australia designated the LTTE as an FTO. The Patriot Act of 2001 and subsequent Anti-Terrorist Financing Act affected the LTTE in the U.S., the UK, and Canada. Originally, this act did not label the LTTE as a terrorist organization.⁷⁸ Consequently, funds were not tracked and frozen like the various Islamic terror groups the act had intentionally targeted. However, in an effort to gain support for the Global War On Terrorism internationally, the United States added unrelated terrorist groups, and in October 2001 froze LTTE assets. Britain and Canada also began freezing LTTE assets in February and November of 2001, respectively.

In addition, many Tamils declined to provide funds to the LTTE for fear of legal action. Law enforcement authorities also began to mobilize and interdict various elements of the Tamil Diaspora and the associated LTTE foreign offices. The LTTE occasionally used Tamil youth gangs in order to collect funds or deter Tamils antithetical to the cause. In October 2001, Canadian Police arrested 40 Tamil gang members in a series of raids in Toronto. In 2003, the Thai authorities arrested and imprisoned three Tamil LTTE operatives attempting to buy weapons in Thailand. This marked the first time Thai

⁷⁶ William F. Owen, "Seek and Destroy: The Forgotten Strategy for Countering Armed Rebellion: Article 2," *Infinity Journal*. 1. no.2 (Spring 2011): 77-89.

⁷⁷ Randi Borchardt, "Counter Terrorist Policy in Comparative Perspective," Monterey, CA, February 15, 2011. Views expressed during the lecture conducted to NS3801 course at NPS.

⁷⁸ Lansing E. Dickinson, *USAF The Military Role in Countering Terrorist Use of Weapons of Mass Destruction* (Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama: United States Air Force Counter proliferation Center, Air War College Air University, 1999), 23.

authorities had interdicted Tamil weapons procurement in their country.⁷⁹ In 2005, the British Charity Commission delisted the TROs' UK office as a charitable organization. In 2006, Canada proscribed the LTTE as a Foreign Terrorist Organization, making it illegal to support or conduct fundraising on the groups' behalf. In April 2006, the RCMP conducted a raid on the World Tamil Movement's headquarters in Montreal.⁸⁰ In the United States, a combined operation netted several LTTE-associated Tamils who were trying to bribe State Department officials, and purchase shoulder-fired surface-to-air missiles.⁸¹ In 2006, the EU proscribed the LTTE as a Foreign Terrorist Organization. In 2007, Intelsat Ltd., a Washington D.C.-based company, banned the Tamil Television Network from using its system. The network then moved to Paris, and began televising its LTTE propaganda again. However, in May 2007, French authorities shut it down, under the new provisions of the FTO designation that the EU adopted the previous year.⁸²

In April 2007, the leaders of the LTTEs' office in Paris, and 13 others, were arrested on charges of "financing terrorism" and "criminal associations with a terrorist enterprise." The LTTE then sent a replacement to France, to oversee operations. He was in turn arrested in September 2007 by French authorities.⁸³ In April 2007, the FBI arrested Karunakaran Kandasamy, the head of the LTTE office in the United States. Evidence collected from the arrest alluded to a front organization, the World Tamil Coordinating Committee having raised millions for the LTTE. In May of 2007, Australian authorities arrested two LTTE Tamils who were involved in a fraudulent campaign to collect money for Tsunami relief victims. The relief organization was actually an LTTE front, and authorities seized over 520,000 USD in assets.⁸⁴ In June 2007, British authorities, for violating laws under the British Terrorism Act, arrested the

⁷⁹ Stanley Allen McChrystal, "It Takes a Network," *Foreign Policy*, August 18, 2010, accessed March 5, 2011, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/02/22/it_takes_a_network?page=full, 1–3.

⁸⁰ Peiris, "Clandestine Transactions of the LTTE," 1–23.

⁸¹ Media Center Sri Lanka, "Media Center for National Development for Sri Lanka, 1A.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ D. B. S. Jeyaraj, <http://dbsjeyaraj.com/dbsj>, "Tiger factions gear up for Nov27th 'Maveerar Naal.'" November 18, 2011. Accessed December 10, 2011. <http://dbsjeyaraj.com/dbsj/archives/2923>.

⁸⁴ Christine Fair, "Diaspora Involvement in Insurgencies: Insights from the Khalistan and Tamil Eelam Movements," *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, 11 (2005), 23–33.

president of the British Tamil Association, Arunachalam Chrishanthakumar. A British court later froze all of his assets, worth four billion pounds sterling.⁸⁵

C. NON-WESTERN BIAS, INDEPENDENT GOVERNMENT MACHINERY AND POLITICAL STABILITY OF THE COUNTRY

The agenda of the Western policy had no concern for Sri Lanka. A UK based TV channel launched a program which was named, Sri Lanka's killing field. It was produced by Channel four. This sparked a lot of controversy and generated numerous debates within Sri Lanka, which included high profile political and diplomatic leaders, foreign as well as local journalists.⁸⁶ The government of Sri Lanka condemned the TV show as unreal and mere exaggeration, the international communities; Western nations in particular, were blaming the government of Sri Lanka for the increased violence within the country.

The British government in particular was always blaming the government of Sri Lanka for the Eelam wars. The issue of the Tamil insurgency in Sri Lanka was used as a focal point by these nations as a way to express their superiority in the matters of minority rights, civil accountability and human rights. All such statements remain limited to theory, and practice, as we can see, is a completely different and essentially paradoxical ballgame.

The international nations, Western in particular, have not shown any concern for the causes of the Sri Lankan government. Leading those nations is, of course, U.S. the country has been accusing the government of Sri Lanka for not abiding by the humanitarian laws. These claims are majorly due to the factors, which produce the UN's War Crimes Report, commonly called the Darusman Report. One of the most remarkable facts about this report is that it has somehow, intentionally or unintentionally, omitted the mass devastation and murders caused by the Tamil Tigers from 1983. Due to this fact most of the people do not know that facts regarding the crimes caused by the Tamil Tigers because the media and such reports have done a beautiful job in overlooking them.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Chalk, Commentary no. 77: Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam's (LTTE) International Organization and Operations, 45-90.

The Tamil Tigers can be easily held by the IHL (International Humanitarian Law), however, the Western communities, the UN and Navi Pillai, intentionally or unintentionally, have managed to overlook this concern when the Tamil insurgency was at its peak. Perhaps the most important feat achieved by the Sri Lankan government was that it did not bend to the pressures of international communities to terminate the war against the Tamil Tigers. China and Russia were two nations who supported the Sri Lankan government throughout its counterinsurgency campaign and even in the security council of UN. This boosted the government's confidence to continue the counterinsurgency measures towards the eradication of the LTTE. In the past 50 years, Sri Lanka has faced numerous challenges including the natural disasters and domestic wars. The political leaders and policy makers of Sri Lanka have been depending largely on foreign aid due to continuous adjustments in the planning and development of the policies of the country during the time when the Plan implementation Ministry was shut off. Contrary to the previous efforts, during the final war of Eelam, the government of Sri Lanka adopted tactical strategies to eradicate the Tamil Tigers once and for all. However, in previous years the government relied heavily on peace negotiations and terminated the counterinsurgency strategies that worsen the situation even further.⁸⁷ Major attacks on the military and navy base camps were repelled very effectively and successfully. The counterbalancing measures were launched to re-open the gates of Mavilaru sluice and continued until the leadership and troops of the Tamil Tigers were completely eradicated.

However, Sri Lankan President Rajapaksa, after coming into power in 2005, attempted to transform the features of the government and leadership entirely and employed the similar guerrilla warfare strategies that were adopted by the Tamil Tigers in the previous three wars of Eelam.

Additionally, in 2006, the murder attempts of the Tamil Tigers against close confidant and Chief of Army in the month of April; the closing of the gates of Mavil by the Tamil Tigers in July; and the unsuccessful suicide attack on the brother of the President and Defense Secretary in December—they all proved to be encourage the

⁸⁷ De Votta, *Blowback Linguistic Nationalism*, 111.

President to discard 2002 peace negotiations with the Tamil Tigers and President Rajapaksa attempted to transform. In the end, President Rajapaksa attempted for an all-out final solution to the Tamil Tigers through military means. The counterinsurgency campaign, which was carried out in the eastern region, incorporated various methods of wars such as combined land, sea, and air operations and marine guerrilla warfare etc. These units and task forces infiltrated deep inside the control lines of Tamil Tigers.

The murder of foreign minister of Sri Lanka in 2005, suicide bombs on army headquarters of Sri Lankas in 2006, and in the same year, attack on Trincomalee Harbour not only persuaded the uncompromising the Sri Lankan government but the Western communities as well, about the crimes committed by the Tamil Tigers. Consequently, after the events of 9/11 other countries took action against the Tamil Tigers. However, once started, these activities increased in number. In 2001, Great Britain and Australia designated the LTTE as an FTO. The PATRIOT Act of 2001 and subsequent Anti-Terrorist Financing Act affected the LTTE in the U.S., the UK and Canada. Originally, this act did not label the LTTE as a terrorist organization. However, in an effort to gain support for the Global War on Terrorism internationally, the United States added unrelated terrorist groups, and in October 2001 froze LTTE assets. Britain and Canada also began freezing LTTE assets in February and November of 2001, respectively. China and Russia were two nations who supported the Sri Lankan government throughout its counterinsurgency campaign and even in the security council of UN. This boosted the government's confidence to continue the counterinsurgency measures towards the eradication of the LTTE.

Summarily, Sri Lanka's political leadership between 1995 until 2004, were not successful because the Sri Lankan government failed to bring down the rising insurgency of the Tamil Tigers. All the previous three wars ended with peace talks between the government and the insurgent groups. During the time, the government was not able to achieve the most vital aim of the counterinsurgency strategy. However, Sri Lankan President Rajapaksa, after coming into power in 2005, attempted to transform the features of the government and leadership entirely and employed the similar guerrilla warfare strategies, which were adopted by the Tamil Tigers in the previous three wars of Eelam.

The government also chosen capable, strongly patriotic characters to command the security forces by that he attempted to employ the strategies that the Tamil Tigers were using through the prolonged war, which resulted in violent streaks, along with militant propaganda and innovative guerrilla warfare strategies.

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IV. THE SRI LANKA MILITARY STRATEGY AND APPARATUS

Much of the COIN success against the LTTE stems from the efforts of the military apparatus in tackling the guerrilla fighters. The Sri Lankan Army saw drastic transformation from EELAM I to EELAM IV in terms of fighting tactics. An amalgamation of conventional and guerrilla tactics that ensured the ultimate destruction and defeat of the LTTE replaced the conventional methods of the army. This chapter examines the efforts of the security forces, the Sri Lankan Army, Air force and Navy in combating the insurgents. Also, the use of technology for the purpose of surveillance and war by the armed forces has also been discussed. The military apparatus worked with great unity and sustained efforts throughout to ensure that the country get free from the clutches of the LTTE.

A. TRANSFORMATION OF MILITARY OPERATIONS FROM CONVENTIONAL TO COMBINATION OF CONVENTIONAL AND GUERRILLA TACTICS

During the initial stages of the Sri Lankan terrorism, the government lacked unity in the orders and directions with the military forces to collaborate on any counterinsurgency strategy. The Sri Lankan government only wanted to respond to the threats by the Tamil Tigers with military power. It was not concerned with the political aspects, which can be used to the issue. Although the history of ethnic rioting in post-independence Sri Lanka began as a series of legislative measures that the Tamil community perceived to be antithetical to Tamil interests, Sinhalese and Sri Lankan government reactions to Tamil grievances eventually sparked widespread violence that physically and emotionally destroyed Tamil communities.

In the early years of 1985, the intelligence director and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs South Asia Desk Director presented a combined proposal to the Sri Lankan President in order to develop a representative committee of all the agencies to discuss the question about the ethnic minorities.⁸⁸ However, the government never responded to their

⁸⁸ S. D. Muni, *Pangs of Proximity: Sri Lanka's Ethnic Crisis* (Newbury Park: Sage Publications Pvt. Ltd, 1993), 39–43.

submitted proposal. Nonetheless, the intelligence director believed it would be beneficial if the government worked with various agencies, which also helped them in understanding that the Indians largely supported the Tamil Tigers. Since 1986 until 1989, only the National Security Council was the permanent organisation, which discussed the issue of the Tamil Tigers and the methods of combating against their insurgent groups. This organisation met every week to discuss the latest events of the LTTE uprising.⁸⁹ The purpose of these meetings was to discuss how the Sri Lankan government counterbalance the insurgency terrorisation through counterinsurgency measures of military and armed forces.

The intelligence director of that time stated that the Sri Lankan government has chosen the asymmetrical strategy because NSC hardly had the aspiration to hold the totality of the issue. The question of ethnicity is multi-dimensional; therefore, it should be resolved by formulating a logical strategy, which requires both political as well as diplomatic leaders, along with strategies enforced by the military and armed forces.⁹⁰ Similar to DI's opinion, the Secretary Defence also explained during the interview that the lack of a coherent and logical strategy is because of the failed attempts of then government to develop and employ a stable and fully functioning organisation or committee, which would have resulted in bringing all the representatives and specialists of all the agencies that were associated in this war, under one roof.⁹¹ There are various other fronts like external support, intelligence, leadership and public support, as well as post-war measures that ensure successful implementation of COIN strategies. The shortage of unity of effort between military and governmental leadership of Sri Lanka from 1995 until 2004 resulted in defeat by the LTTE.

Initially, the Sri Lankan government did not receive any external support and when it did, it was not sufficient to counterbalance the terrorism of the LTTE. During the

⁸⁹ Mao Tse-Tung, *On Guerrilla Warfare*, (New York: Classic House Books, 2009), 9.

⁹⁰ Smith, "The Eelam Endgame?," 71–72 and Neil Smith, "Understanding Sri Lanka's Defeat of the Tamil Tigers," *Joint Forces Quarterly* (September 4, 2010), Accessed August 5, 2011 from <http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/understanding-sri-lankas-defeat-of-the-tamil-tigers>.

⁹¹ V. K. Shashikumar, "Interview with Gotabaya Rajapaksa: Nine Decisions that Helped Lanka Beat LTTE," *Sify News*, April 24, 2010.

mid of first Eelam battle, the first major external support came in the way of Indian peacekeeping force, also known as the IPKF. The intervention of India in this conflict put extra pressure on the Sri Lankan government; therefore, the Sri Lankan government had to terminate the operation against the Tamil militants. Thousands of Indian troops as a Peace Keeping Force landed in Sri Lanka to help with the conflict as a result of signed peace agreement between two countries in 1987. The attempt of Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) to neutralize the Tamil Tiger failed. As soon as the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) left the country, the Tamil Tigers got hold of the northern and eastern provinces of the island. Government again made sufficient efforts to hold peace talks with the LTTE, which did not result as anticipated. The small operations later became fully blown war. The LTTE often viciously targeted and murdered the police.⁹² In October, during the operation in Jaffna, IPKF faced major upsets when it was responding to the attacks of the Tamil Tigers on the Sri Lankan government agencies. IPKF soon found its troops heavily insufficient and at times they were less than half as compared to the Tamil Tigers. Not only IPKF lacked personnel but they were also deprived of equipments, machinery and ammunition etc. They also had little knowledge about guerrilla war tactics. Overall, the mission of IPKF was poorly failed and the strategically executed tactics of Tamil Tiger soon overwhelmed them.⁹³ The Tamil Tigers made use of underground mines, human guards and penetrated into the control lines of the IPKF. They caused numerous fatalities, which shattered the peacekeeping hopes from the IPKF. Such brave acts from the Tamil Tigers strengthened their support within the Tamil civilians.⁹⁴

Long after employing the counterinsurgency techniques of IPKF, the Tamil Tigers rose to the strength of 32,000 fighters and managed to capture the region of Jaffna. However, the IPKF had to face severe challenges. The Indian troops lacked the desire of effort and unity of command as every attempt to counteract the insurgents was made possible through politics and diplomacy. Additionally, Indian and Sri Lankan government

⁹² Winslow and Woost, *Economy, Culture, and Civil War in Sri Lanka*, 71–73.

⁹³ Smith, “The Eelam Endgame?;” Neil Smith, “Understanding Sri Lanka’s Defeat.”

⁹⁴ Winslow and Woost, *Economy, Culture, and Civil War in Sri Lanka*, 71–73.

were not in an agreement over the threat of the Tamil Tigers, whether to execute Prabhakaran, and how to eradicate LTTE controlled areas. After the IPKF pull out in 1990, the LTTE developed into a fearsome insurgency. Using the funding provided by the Diaspora, they rose in number and notoriety. They controlled large areas in northern Sri Lanka. Subsequent operations by the Sri Lankan military throughout the 1990s and early 2000s were typically met with disaster as the LTTE continually outmanoeuvred them on land, sea, and air. Once firmly in power after 1990, the LTTE had little to gain from realizing reintegration in the Sri Lankan government and much to gain economically and politically from the struggle to gain an independent Tamil Eelam. Yet, it was not clear that the majority of Sri Lankan Tamils, still living in north and east Sri Lanka, shared this dream of an LTTE-controlled independent Tamil state. This can be seen in the actions that the LTTE took while governing their own political space for about 20 years.

Meanwhile, the Tamil Tigers expanded their weapons and battle equipment to commence major militant operations in achieving their objectives. They also commenced marine attacks on military and armed forces base camps alongside the land troops.

Same as the first campaign period, the government developed capabilities of the security forces, but they continued to lack the resources and potentials to effectively wipe-out the LTTE. By 1999, the Army had increased her numbers to 120,000 heads, with some 75,000 to 85,000 in operational duty. “In addition, the air force and navy grew to 17,000 and 15,000, respectively. The government also bolstered its police force, which stood at 50,000. At the time, the LTTE numbered around 16,000 to 17,000 active members.”⁹⁵ “However, number of supporters was more than the active cadres and the number was not known to anybody. The government increased its war budget. In 1999,

⁹⁵ Marc Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks*, 42.

the government spent 37 percent of its budget fighting the insurgency. However, Sri Lanka spent little resources rebuilding damaged infrastructure in Tamil areas or provide relief to those who fled the North and East where government forces clashed with the LTTE.”⁹⁶

During the third war of Eelam, the military and armed forces of Sri Lanka did not have sufficient troops, training and experience to combat the Tamil Tigers effectively. The military were not able to sustain the re-captured regions and move forward into the regions of the rebel groups at the same time.⁹⁷ In addition to this, the military adopted standard operating strategies to an unconventional war. This is the reason why the war against of LTTE was so prolonged. Many as a whack-a-mole syndrome described this condition. It means that if military services were capable of clearing one area from LTTE control, the Tamil Tigers would re-surface in other area. The military and armed forces were not capable of moving forward and eradicate the Tamil Tigers once and for all.⁹⁸

In 2000, during the months of March and July, the UNP leader Ranil Wickremesinghe met with then President Kumaratunga more than 12 times. These meetings were aimed at reviewing the terms and conditions for the decentralisation process. After a long debate and deep analyses, Ranil Wickremesinghe and President Kumaratunga came to an agreement. The Tamil political leaders in the coalition government backed away from the agreement. These Tamil leaders originally agreed to the terms of the agreement back in the year 1997. This also proved to be one of the barriers to the resolution. Another factor that caused to be a barrier was the lack of direct contact of Sri Lankan government with the leaders of LTTE. The leadership of the Tamil Tigers also disagreed to the decentralisation process because, according to them, they were not involved when the government was making decisions. Another reason for

⁹⁶ John Sislin and Frederic Pearson, “Arms and Escalation in Ethnic Conflicts: The Case of Sri Lanka,” *International Studies Perspectives*, 2006, 60.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 60.

⁹⁸ Sebastian L. V. Gorka, and David Kilcullen, “An Actor-centric Theory of War: Understanding the Difference Between COIN and Counterinsurgency,” *JFQ Quarterly*, no. 60 (1st Quarter 2011), <http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf&AD=ADA535254> (accessed August 05, 2012), 14–18.

disagreement was that the Tamil Tigers demanded that the northern regions and the eastern regions should be unified and their authority should be given to the Tamil community.

A vital element that resulted in the loss of popularity of LTTE in the eastern region of the country and its inadequate combating capacities was the defection of Colonel Karuna in 2004. He was responsible for leading an army of around 500 to 600 devoted men alongside the government. This had a profound impact on the abilities of the Tamil Tigers as well as the counterinsurgency strategies of the Rajapaksa government.⁹⁹ According to the Sergei De Silva Ranasinghe from Future Directions International, the LTTE east wing, which was led by Karuna, went subversive with its approximately 500 to 600 fighters. They were also heavily engaged in military operations against the Tamil Tigers. This division within the LTTE resulted in the Tamil Tiger's attempt to modify their conventional tactics of operations in order to respond to the growing strength of Sri Lankan government and Colonel Karuna.

The Tamil Tigers of the eastern wing were operating in a conventional manner instead of fighting like a rebel group. They arrested, tortured and murdered numerous civilians with the suspicion of involvement in the LTTE Karuna wing or the government. Although the Tiger leadership in the east was not strong enough, the devoted LTTE militants fought the armed forces like conventional military and more like a rebel group, which proved to be a flawed strategy by the LTTE because they lacked sufficient manpower to conduct a conventional military attack.

To win the war on the LTTE, the Army strategically adopted the unique and usual irregular warfare tactics that also commissioned and mastered by the LTTE, and began using these tactics to supplement its major military manoeuvre against the attacks conducted by the LTTE, who were also applied a conventional strategy. The government also attempted to employ the strategies that the Tamil Tigers were using through the prolonged war, which resulted in violent streaks, along with militant propaganda and innovative guerrilla warfare strategies. The Sri Lankan government primarily focused on

⁹⁹ Dissanayaka, "War or Peace in Sri Lanka," 227–231.

strategies to bring the entire nation under one umbrella by utilising the strategy of winning the hearts and minds of the nation and defeat the Tamil insurgency as a united nation. He also collaborated with the political leaders of the Tamil community, who were discriminated by the Tamil Tigers of the northern region. He also ordered the leaders of the military and security forces to conduct counterinsurgency measures to eradicate the Tamil Tigers without politicising the war. Perhaps the most important feat achieved by his leadership was that his government did not bend to the pressures of international communities to terminate the war against the Tamil Tigers.

Initially, the Sri Lankan government opted chasing the military strategy for eradicating the Tamil Tigers by using standard operating procedures. Furthermore, the Sri Lankan government also faced defeat in expanding its tactics beyond the military strategies and developing international socioeconomic and political elements of counterbalancing the insurgent attacks. For instance, the government of Sri Lanka failed to provide a reasonable and alternative direction to the Tamil community, who were in the middle of the war between the Tamil Tigers and the Sri Lankan government and suffered the most. The government of Sri Lanka also failed to take drastic measures to ease the distress of the Tamil community in the northern and eastern regions. Additionally, the speed at which the counterinsurgency (COIN) strategies were executed was quite slow and insufficient to counterbalance the ever-increasing international and local threat by the Tamil Tigers. The Armed and Military forces of Sri Lanka deployed a combined RMA strategy, which included RMA I, RMA III and RMA IV. The war inclined more towards the guerrilla methods of warfare in order to counterbalance the combined RMA strategies of the Tamil Tigers.

By late 2006, the figures of SIOT-trained soldiers had increased by 1:6 ratios prior to the commencement of hostilities. The counterinsurgency (COIN) campaign, which was carried out in the eastern region, incorporated various methods of wars such as combined land, sea, and air operations, SIOT (Special Infantry Operation Team) units, special task forces and marine guerrilla warfare etc. These units and task forces infiltrated

deep inside the control lines of the Tamil Tigers.¹⁰⁰ SIOT (Special Infantry Operation Team) units comprised of very experienced sophisticated and well-trained officers who had the ability to operate separately for a little time. These soldiers can be pushed into the forests in the beginning of the battle. Commandos and special military forces can be sent after them for support to catch Tamil tiger off guard and defeat them. ¹⁰¹ These modifications led to a recharged Sri Lankan Army, which chased the LTTE out of the eastern province initially and then from the Northern Province.

Full-scale aggression arose in August 2006 when the LTTE shut down the Mavilaru sluice gate, which is in the Trincomalee region, in July of 2006. Due to this, more than 30,000 civilians in the east region were left without the supply of water. This caused severe deprivation of fresh drinking water for Tamils, Muslims and Sinhalese and also for the rice fields that require a huge supply of water.¹⁰² In turn, the Sri Lankan Army launched a counter attack was aimed to reclaim the Mavilaru sluice gate and open supply of drinking water for the residents. However, this operation was delayed and launches in a number of phases. It was aimed to counteract for the major attack at the Muhamalai by the Tamil Tigers in August of 2006. At that time, Muhamalai was the country's national front in the northern region.

The Sri Lankan army further incorporated effective and strategic operations to counteract the threats that were posed by the Tamil Tigers. Due to this, the Tamil Tigers had to rethink the strategies they need to adopt; they chose the traditional rebel strategies, which was in complete contrast to their more conventional strategies that they adopted earlier in the year 2006. The Tamil Tigers re-launched the militant activities in the Vavuniya region to respond to the operations conducted by the Special Forces and military attacks of Sri Lankan national army. To balance the lack of strategic effectiveness, the Tamil Tigers relied heavily on its relatively young wing, the Air Tigers, in order to protect the Tiger forces in different parts of the country. These aircraft were

¹⁰⁰ Swamy, *The Tiger Vanquished: LTTE's Story*, 178- 190.

¹⁰¹ Chalk, "Commentary no. 77: Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam's (LTTE) International Organization and Operations.

¹⁰² Ranasinghe, "Defeat of the LTTE and its Significance," 12-19.

also used for the purpose of suicide bombings and assassinations to launch less intense yet deadly attacks throughout the country. The aim of these attacks was to target famous politicians, significant government officials, military officials as well as vital infrastructure of the country.¹⁰³ In general, the entire counterinsurgency strategy of Sri Lankan government was to overwhelm the Tamil Tigers with the combined impact of both conventional as well as guerrilla combat strategies. Massive coordinated missile attacks were also launched effectively to target the Tamil Tigers. All these measures were taken based on the information provided by the ground forces, and technological innovations such as the UAV and the interception of communication etc. Such aggressive military actions deployed by the Sri Lankan government forced the LTTE to take defensive measures.

The government's expenditure on defense inclined. In the year of 2007, Sri Lanka was a relatively unsound nation, regarding the economy. The island country had spent over one billion U.S. dollars in defense. The next year the country spent over 1.48 billion U.S. dollars and in 2009, it spent 1.6 billion U.S. dollars.¹⁰⁴ This assisted the efforts of Defense Secretary, "Commander of the Army and other two service commanders in transforming and enhancing the capabilities of the Sri Lankan Army, Navy [and Air Force]."¹⁰⁵ With these funds the military was capable of purchasing military equipment. The new annual budget also incorporated the funds for five new segments of the Sri Lankan Army, which was going to confront the Tamil Tigers.¹⁰⁶ While the army was transforming into a war oriented and ordered organisation, the air force and the naval forces were also developed its air and sea power capabilities in order to counterbalance the Tamil Tiger successfully on air and in the sea.

¹⁰³ Sharika Thiranagama, "Moving on? Memory, Generation and Home for Displaced Northern Muslims in Sri Lanka," in: Carsten J. (Ed.) *Ghosts of Memory: Essays on Remembrance and Relatedness* (London: Blackwell, 2007), 44–50.

¹⁰⁴ Swamy, *The Tiger Vanquished: LTTE's Story*, 100–276.

¹⁰⁵ Shanika, President's clear vision, key factor in eradicating terrorism.

¹⁰⁶ Siriyananda, Shanika. "President's Clear Vision, Key Factor in Eradicating Terrorism," *Sunday Observer*, accessed August 15, 2011, <http://www.sundayobserver.lk/2010/08/15/sec03.asp>.

Through the approach of Eelam War IV, the government improved the security forces, which allowed the Sri Lankan forces to confront the LTTE through many directions and influence them to stretch their cadres thin. Further, the military avoided usual irregular warfare tactics and workout training on special operations and small group tactics, which helped military forces to counter the LTTE conventional strategies and accordingly organized offensives. When LTTE broke out Eelam war IV, they believed that they could match the Sri Lanka military. This over confidence and carelessness toppled the rebel's balance of power and given much favors to the government forces. By April 2007, security forces had taken the total control of strategic A-5 highway in the East after 15 years. The military forces of Sri Lanka were successful to reclaim Thoppigala, which was the largest active campsite of the Tamil Tigers in the eastern region. By June of 2007, military officers overran the operational base of the Tamil Tigers in Batticaloa in the eastern region of the country and managed to capture additional campsites to the northern and southern area. During Eelam war IV, the primary military strategy was killing or apprehending the LTTE rebels than going for the land because a reduction of LTTE cadres involuntarily led to easy seizing of the ground. Within a year, the success of Sri Lankan government in the eastern region helped the government to reclaim around 6500 kilometre of the area and eradication of the Tamil Tigers from that region. Later, the Defence Secretary directed the Sri Lankan Air Force, Navy, Police and other security forces, along with Karuna's east division, to concentrate on threatening campaign in the northern region.¹⁰⁷

The military advanced through LTTE defences and capture the strategically important Mannar Island in June 2008 and, few weeks after, taken the control of four more LTTE bases including their vital sea tiger base Vedithalivu. The military mostly focused on the Jaffna region in order to reclaim the Poonarien Isthmus—also called the Elephant Pass—and Kilinochchi, which was considered the capital of the Tamil Tigers. The capturing of these regions proved to be strategically significant for the military operations and resulted in the demise of the Tamil Tigers in January of 2009.

¹⁰⁷ Ranasinghe, "Defeat of the LTTE and its Significance," 12–19.

As discussed previously, the Western communities helped in seizing the offshore networks of the Tamil Tigers. With the lack of funds, the Tamil Tigers were severely weakened. The flow of funds and military equipment was stopped. Additionally, the Sri Lankan Naval force successfully fought against the weakened the Tamil Tigers due to the increased capabilities of the Sri Lankan Naval force. For instance, during the years of 2006 and 2007, the Sri Lankan Naval force was successful in destroying 11 trucks and six container ships, which contained weapons, military equipment and hardware.¹⁰⁸ Additionally, further into the war, the Sri Lankan Naval force disrupted the communication line of the Tamil Tigers from Tamil Nadu. This action deprived the Tamil Tigers from their much required weapons, military equipment and hardware.

One of the significant progresses for the Sri Lankan government was the introduction of Small Boat Squadron (SBS). These squads implemented the guerrilla war strategies to use against the Tamil marine tigers. Their main objective was to fight the sea Tiger wing of the LTTE. Just like the strategies adopted in the eastern region of the country, the Tamil Tigers were forced to implement the defensive military strategy and heavily depended on the strategic lines. According to the Army Commander, the SIOT troops successfully infiltrated the control lines of the Tamil Tigers and caught them by surprise and eradicating them once and for all.¹⁰⁹

By the year 2008, the Wanni movement was rising. The Sri Lankan Army deployed a similar strategy in the eastern region, implemented using past lessons learned in the region. Sri Lankan Army Commander utilized the strategy for inflicting high number of fatalities of the Tamil Tigers and conducting military operations constantly without providing the chance for the opponent. Sri Lankan army commenced the military measures over several fronts to use the British strategy of Divide and conquer. The SIOTs, Special Forces, Commandos, and Airmobile Brigade, with well-coordinated artillery and air, facilitated to succeed the new military strategy.

¹⁰⁸ O'Balance, *The Cyanide War*, 20.

¹⁰⁹ Ranasinghe, "Defeat of the LTTE and its Significance," 12–19.

In the month of January, the Sri Lankan Army commander deployed three task forces to the northeastern coastline of the country. This applied added pressure on the Tamil Tigers.¹¹⁰ Later the Sri Lankan Army deployed two more task forces to move from the Jaffna region to Kilinochichi to shut the northern side of the border to Jaffna region. Three more task forces were deployed from the southern region. During all this time, the Sri Lankan Army continued fighting the Tamil Tigers and the Sri Lankan Navy continued fighting the Sea Tigers and sea capabilities of LTTE, while hindering all the possible LTTE sea routes to the country. Yet despite their successes and wealth, the LTTE eventually came to an end. In May of 2009, after a two-and-a-half year military offensive, the Sri Lankan Armed Forces surrounded the last of the insurgents as they attempted a desperate last stand, ironically enough, on the beaches in Mullaitivu. The LTTE was once a unit of over 10,000 battle-hardened guerrillas. However, the remnants that attempted this act of desperation consisted of many conscripted young children, who held civilians as human shields. Meanwhile, their core leadership made desperate calls from their makeshift bunkers for American or British protection upon surrender. Arguably, they were only a shell of what was once considered to be one of the most feared insurgent movements of the modern age. This last stand resulted in the death and capture of the last of the holdouts.

Improvement and development in the logistics and services boosted soldier morale, damaged the insight of the terrorist's strength, and finally caused an end to the terrorism. Lack of logistically feasible capabilities ruled out consistent defensive strategies. Brilliant counteracting techniques will always defeat flawed strategies. Vellupillai Prabhakaran failed to anticipate the strength of the superior opponent forces. He did not formulate a defence strategy and support strategy, which the militant or rebel forces require during the insurgency movements. This illustrates that his strategies were flawed and failed to foresee the need for a revised strategy. The Tamil Tigers in the previous campaigns always successfully repelled the Eelam War I, II and III conducted by the Sri Lankan government. Major attacks on the military and navy base camps were repelled very effectively and successfully. The counterbalancing measures were launched

¹¹⁰ Winslow and Woost, *Economy, Culture, and Civil War in Sri Lanka*, 71–73.

to re-open the gates of Mavilaru sluice and continued until the leadership and troops of Tamil Tigers were completely eradicated. During these successful operations the Tamil Tigers were defeated because they did not anticipate the strength of the superior opponent and did not revise their strategies. They also did not anticipate the new tactics and strategies that were adopted by the military and armed forces of Sri Lanka. After eradicating the leadership and troops of the Tamil Tigers, the humanitarian operation was terminated by the Sri Lankan government on nineteenth of May 2009. After almost 20 years, the Sri Lankan government was able to regain total control of Sri Lanka.¹¹¹

Transformation of military tactics and strategies from conventional to irregular warfare reached remarkable success by the security forces as well as the government. These strategies also decreased military casualty figures considerably and spared more battalions to generate strong reserves for each front. Furthermore, multidirectional and surprise offensives and a frequent change of tactics kept the LTTE on the run which ultimately led to continuous confusion and loss of central command within the LTTE system, paving to the success. Although clear vision, mission and ultimate objective helped the military to succeed superb victories, they could not have reached their task without the support and backing of friendly foreign nations like China and Pakistan, and particularly, the Indian unbiased policy. During the Eelam War I, II, and III, India had blocked or pressure the government to stop the military offensives whenever LTTE was about to be crushed or deteriorated; but at the Eelam War IV, the government strategy abled to ally itself with Indian policies and maintained Indian interference away from the military actions. However, government all ways kept India informed on all events. “The Indian role during the Elam War IV tremendously helped the success of the campaign, even though they did not provide any physical military assistance except routine military training, which they had also provided during the Eelam Wars I, II and III.”¹¹²

¹¹¹ Ragavan, *Peace Process in Sri Lanka, Challenges and Opportunities*, 72–93.

¹¹² Shanika. “President’s clear vision, key factor in eradicating terrorism.

B. USE OF TECHNOLOGY COORDINATED INTELLIGENCE NET WORK

In the first Eelam war, the army of Sri Lanka had to deal with the reinforced uprising by the Tamil Tigers. The Tamil Tiger used all the new and innovative technical equipment and military hardware that were accessible at that moment. However, they were not capable of controlling the condition as Tamil Tiger, with the new and innovative technical equipment and military hardware that were accessible had developed from a little group of devoted fighters to a conservative military force.¹¹³

The use of innovative technical equipment in the second war was similar to the first war. A lot of effort has been invested in the intelligence aspect of counterinsurgency principles, which is a clear indication of its importance.¹¹⁴ However, while most of the internal and external government's military forces have needed to work out intelligence strategies through third parties or through the use of technology, insurgency groups need fewer or no third-party or technology assistance, and so have direct access to all intelligence aspects. The Tamil Tiger used all the new and innovative technical equipment and military hardware that were accessible at that moment. However, the Sri Lankan government did not have enough resources or technical resources to counteract the Tamil Tiger attacks.¹¹⁵ "For example, the LTTE's assassination of Sri Lanka President Ranasinghe Premadasa in January 1993 reflects how intelligence officers failed to uncover plots, particularly against prominent political figures."¹¹⁶

The transformation of Sri Lanka's Air Force and Navy also played a crucial part in the annihilation of the Tamil Tigers. During the third Eelam war, Sri Lanka's Navy was challenged to respond to the marine strategies of the Tamil Tigers. When the ceasefire agreement collapsed, Tamil Tiger managed to build a very effective and efficient aircraft to assist their ground troops and launch air attacks. To respond to this,

¹¹³ Wilson, *Revolutions in Military Affairs, 1914 to 2014*, 44.

¹¹⁴ Counter Insurgency Operations: AFM Vol (B) (Colombo, Sri Lanka: Defense Services Command and Staff College, Sri Lanka, 2005), 4–1–9.

¹¹⁵ Alfred Jayaratnam Wilson, *Sri Lankan Tamil Nationalism: Its Origins and Development in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2000), 196.

¹¹⁶ B. Muralidhar Reddy, "Final Hours: An Eyewitness Account of the Last 70 Hours of Eelam War IV," *Frontline*, 26, no. 12, June 6–19 (2009), Accessed August 30, 2011, from <http://www.frontlineonnet.com/fl2612/stories/20090619261200900.htm>

the navy had to employ extensive R&D campaigns. This effort created the “Small Boats” Concept, which principally applied against the LTTE’s irregular sea tactics but on a far greater scale. This newly invented concept helped Navy SBS’s to perform missions in varying levels of sea. And Air Force developed her radar and surveillance system to detect LTTE aircraft from longer distance and introduce new strategies and innovative methods to provide close air support including combat supply.

Around 30,000 armed officers reclaimed the Jaffna region from the Tamil Tigers during the Jaya Sikuru operation in 1995. However, the military started losing their foothold after 18 months and sustained heavy defeat by the Tamil Tigers.¹¹⁷ Although, the Defense Minister did not declare the number of soldiers who lost their lives, but, the impact on the Sri Lankan army’s moral and strength was significant.¹¹⁸ “Later that same year, the LTTE blew up a commuter train killing 78 passengers and conducted a suicide assault on the capital city’s port.”¹¹⁹ The victory of these attacks echoed the Sri Lanka security agencies’ ineffectiveness in gathering and handling intelligence. The role of Police intelligence division’s poor organisation and the unity of effort was one of the major reasons for these gaps.

Information gathered by the intelligence services of the government and army did not always flow down to the police that patrol the streets. Sri Lanka’s Directorate of Internal Intelligence (DII) and the police’s Special Branch, two units tasked with organizing intelligence operations. The problems aroused due to lack of manpower led intelligence agents to fail their missions most of the time. As a result countrymen lost confidence on the military’s’ capability to fight against LTTE. Consequently, Information flows were controlled as well. Dissenting opinions to LTTE were considered as antithetical to LTTE objectives, and were therefore subdued. Meanwhile, the LTTE began to set up information venues. These included the Tamil Television Network,

¹¹⁷ Rotberg, “Creating peace in Sri Lanka: Civil War and Reconciliation,” 71–218.

¹¹⁸ John Moolakatu, “Salvaging the Fractured Sri Lanka Peace Process,” *Peace Review* (2004), 2–16.

¹¹⁹ Amalendu Misra, *Rain on a Parched Land: Reconstructing a Post Conflict Sri Lanka* (International Peacekeeping, 2004).

Tamilnet.com and various postings on shared media sites such as YouTube.com. These sites or the imbedded information therein, are considered by many to be the propaganda of the LTTE.

Dr. Rohan Gunaratna explains that the attack “revealed the weakness of strategic and tactical intelligence collection, analysis, dissemination and review and second, force protection, there was no prioritization of intelligence gathering, projection and sharing to erode the LTTE network.”¹²⁰ Poorly incorporated systems and inability allowed the insurgents, over the course of a year, to launch a wide range of intelligence agencies in Colombo. Surprisingly, there were no true changes in the security setting after the attack. Dr. Fair explained that the idea of the Sri Lankan defence is to raise the quantity of military guards, instead of making improvements in the actual safety and security measures. Efforts of the government to stop propaganda of Tamil Tiger proved to be useless. LTTEs employed a partially authorized political infrastructure, including 38 offices throughout the world, in countries such as South Africa and Japan.¹²¹ The rebels exploited technology such as the Internet, satellites, telephones, and fax machines to deliver routing news related to the Eelam war to the various domestic and international locations. On the other hand, government continuously struggled in an arrangement of censorship and red tape that rarely allowed for its victories to be publicized internally, let alone the other nations. Information flows were controlled as well. Dissenting opinions to LTTE were considered as antithetical to LTTE objectives, and were therefore subdued. Meanwhile, the LTTE began to set up information venues. These included the Tamil Television Network, Tamilnet.com and various postings on shared media sites such as YouTube.com. These sites or the imbedded information therein, are considered by many to be the propaganda of the LTTE. Therefore, while there were virtually no links between the LTTE and the Diaspora in 1983, by at least 2007, there were several connections that gave the Diaspora access to information on the situation in Sri Lanka. Furthermore, since the LTTE allegedly controlled these links, the information provided to the Diaspora was in complete support of LTTE goals and activities. Because of this, many members of the

¹²⁰ Misra, *Rain on a Parched Land*.

¹²¹ Sislin and Pearson, “Arms and Escalation in Ethnic Conflicts,” 60.

Tamil Diaspora openly supported the LTTE. However, globally organized information sharing network played a vital role in pinning down the activities of Tamil diaspora as well as the LTTE's political and arms transport activities. In that, the U. S. played a major role.

Perhaps the most important feat achieved by the Sri Lankan government was that it did not bend to the pressures of international communities to terminate the war against the Tamil Tigers. China and Russia were two nations who supported the Sri Lankan government throughout its counterinsurgency campaign and even in the security council of UN. This boosted the government's confidence to continue the counterinsurgency measures towards the eradication of the LTTE. In the past 50 years, Sri Lanka has faced numerous challenges including the natural disasters and domestic wars. The political leaders and policy makers of Sri Lanka have been depending largely on foreign aid due to continuous adjustments in the planning and development of the policies of the country.

As a whole, the case of Sri Lanka reinforces that a cohesive and united military effort is required to beat the insurgents. An integrated system permitted the armed force and SLG to establish an extensive intelligence apparatus that ultimately led to the defeat of the LTTE. Furthermore, the assistance of other countries, in terms of military and moral support played an important part in successfully employing COIN strategies.

The Sri Lankan government successfully turned around the situation when the Sri Lankan government deployed the counterinsurgency (COIN) strategies to its full capacity. The Sri Lankan government also introduced newly formulated counterinsurgency (COIN) strategies to use all the available sources in its capacity to defeat the Tamil Tigers once and for all.

Therefore, if both external resource structures were interdicted to a certain degree, and control over political space was wrested away, even temporarily, the insurgent movement would inevitably crash. Adversely, the opposite may also be true. In this case, an insurgent movement that does not rely upon external resource structures may not be reliant upon control over political space. Consequently, they may become tied to local expectations and values out of sheer necessity, and hence not susceptible to local losses

of legitimacy. Therefore, large conventional pitched battles to wrest away political space, coupled with attempts to interdict respective external resource structures will have no effect upon the insurgent organization. To a degree, this lesson seems to be absent from many works that catalogue the contributing factors of the LTTEs' demise.

V. STRATEGIC MEASURES ON MEDIA AND RESETTLEMENT

The cause-and-effect relationships that constitute wars are not limited to the battlefields. The fact of the matter remains that war is a multilateral engagement between opposing parties that face off on numerous fronts other than the battlefield. In this regard, post-war measures such as those brought forth as a result of COIN strategies are critically imperative. The relevance of the media's role and relevance in this regard is critically imperative. The COIN strategies that were developed and implemented by Sri Lanka were significantly different when compared to traditional COIN strategies. The attribute that set apart Sri Lanka's COIN strategy is that these strategies made exceptionally good use of the media. These strategies identified and utilized the media as a resource that could provide the competitive edge that was required to win the war. The Eelam wars present significant evidence regarding the role of the media in wars. However, it merits highlighting that the defeat of LTTE could not have come around without the role of the media.

The president chose to make use of the lessons of the past by developing and implementing a COIN strategy that went beyond the battlefield and chose to bring together resources that were not commonly associated with war.

A. EXTERNAL SUPPORT FOR THE GOVERNMENT

The LTTE was declared a SDTG (Specially Designated Global Terrorist Group) by the U.S. and as a result, the SLG managed to receive a significant degree of external support. This led to a direct dismantling of the international money generating operations of the Tamil Tigers.¹²² In addition, it also had a direct implication on the purchasing operations as well.¹²³

Eelam IV was mainly driven by an operations-first mentality from 2006 to 2009. The underlying philosophy behind this approach was to make use of military capacity instead of directly employing military force. The use of military capacity allowed for the

¹²² Deborah and Woost, "Economy, Culture, and Civil War in Sri Lanka," 71–73.

¹²³ Ranasinghe, "Defeat of the LTTE and its Significance," 12–19.

uprooting of the military strength of the Tamil Tigers and helped to ensure that the Tamil Tigers did not manage to come forth as jeopardy to the safety of the GOSL military and the control over the country's governance. In this regard, the SLA began operations from the southern regions that were known to be under the government's control. The usage of these regions helped to provide the SLA with the stepping-stone that it desperately needed in order to put a crack in the LTTE. This approach was continued until dominance over the region was regained. This approach also helped to directly address the essential terrorism that the LTTE sought to instill in the hearts of the masses. It was considered imperative to address the essential purpose of the insurgencies in order for the SLA to overcome the challenge of abolishing the LTTE threat. However, it is important to note that the LTTE soon realized the degree to which this strategy was influencing their operations and began to realize the necessity of acquiring and holding military control.

B. MEDIA TRANSPARENCY AND PROPAGANDA

The media itself failed to realize its role in the initial stages of the conflict. The effect of the media was hardly merit able of any significant in the beginning. Any measures taken by the government that included force were considered to be nothing less than atrocities on the part of the government. In essence, a deficiency in the information circulating in the media helped to place the media in a state of ignorance regarding the devastations being caused by the LTTE's actions. In fact, the role of the media was first clearly recognized by the LTTE. The LTTE managed to make use of the media to its own advantage. The Tamil elements managed to make use of the media during the initial three wars. The Tamil Diaspora managed to make use of the Internet to its own advantage. The losses were exaggerated and public sentiment was manipulated in an attempt to distort reality and facts.

The role and relevance of the media was unparalleled and the state of affairs was worsened by the fact that the media did not manage to support the government in any manner. In fact, the media ended up propagating pro-Tamil information; that eventually

served the purpose of the Tamil insurgents.¹²⁴ In essence, the government, its efforts, and the rationale behind the government's efforts were seriously undermined during the course of the wars.

The second and third Eelam wars were given a considerable degree of attention. However, the information was highly politicized. The information provided to the general public in the second and the third EELAM was regarded as the information as highly politicized. Because of the strict censorship on media, there was difficulty for the information to be delivered. The information on state data on various regions and number of social establishments was ignored from war-torn regions and the divested populace. The image, which was showed about the economic and social matters, was very different from what is in reality. This resulted in problem of evaluation and assessment done by the national and international agencies. The coverage of Pongu Tamil demonstrations and LTTE persuaded the student to hold the direct protest on the military camps in the regions of North and East. This created immense disarray that the media completely ignored.¹²⁵ The group of people known as the Sri Lanka Working Journalist Association (SLWJA) accused many of medical personnel of being at the payroll of LTTE. A leaflet was distributed in 2007 signed by Chandragupta Amarasinghe that disclosed this information of accusing the media personnel. It also included the biased role of media in the efforts of the SLG.

As a result the media was used as a weapon of LTTE. In this regard, the government remained silence and the entire news was produced and covered from the end of LTTE. The killings of LLTE were manipulated against the government and were regarded as the genocide against the Tamils. This resulted in a great sympathy at the international front, in which the France and USA supported the LTTE cause.

On the other hand, the government remained avoiding the negative converge being portrayed. The state of art communication was used as a promotion by LTTE at the international and national front. To enhance the LTTE separatist cause, different satellite

¹²⁴ O'Balance, *The Cyanide War*, 11–26.

¹²⁵ John F. Kerry, "Sri Lanka: Recharting U.S. Strategy after the War," Congressional Report (2010), 8.

transmission was built.¹²⁶ The main aim was to increase and raise funds for the cause promoted by the LTTE. Despite of all the facts, the tactic resulted in great success. It was surprisingly noted that many of the news agencies showed their sympathy for the LTTE cause. The news about the suicide attacks and the employment of women and children killers were greatly puffed up. On December 2002, Ranil Wickremesinghe, the prime minister of Sri Lanka declared the LTTE had no connections with any terrorist network groups including Al Qaeda.

This news proved to be set back for all the people. This statement of the Prime Minister in December 2002 was issued in China. This denying of the link of the LTTE with the terrorist networks, framed an entirely different image of LTTE. If the comparisons were drawn, this news would have resulted in great Chinese's support. This was because China had already disapproved any armed force to be given for the favor of the U.S. war in Afghanistan.¹²⁷ This war Afghanistan was against the Al-Qaeda. The accepting of the LTTE as being dangerous and destructive group as Al Qaeda would have worked in a better way for the SLG cause.

A considerable role of gathering sympathies for LTTE was played by the national movies. The contribution of "Sulanga Enu Pinisa" by Vimukthi Jayasundera to the LTTE propaganda can particularly be noted. The movie demonstrated the glorified efforts put in by a soldier who fought for the security of his homeland completely scorning the government's efforts in this regards, which extremely demoralized the government. The movie was openly critiqued by Rear Admiral Sarath Weerasekera who was the present Director General of the CDF (Civil Defence Force).¹²⁸ Apart from that, the serving Army Chief of Staff, Major General Daya Ratnayake and the Commissioner General of Rehabilitation also criticized the ways by which media and some movies had portrayed the image of LTTE. The lack of coverage of war efforts and for the government was considered to be a positive thing as suggested by critics. Due to the fact that LTTE was

¹²⁶ Sislin and Pearson, "Arms and Escalation in Ethnic Conflicts," 137–158.

¹²⁷ Shirley A. Kan, Congressional Research Service: CRS Research for Congress, "U.S.-China Counterterrorism Cooperation: Issues for U.S. Policy, July 15, 2010," accessed October 15, 2010, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/terror/RL33001.pdf>.

¹²⁸ Ikramul Majeed Sehgal, *Defense Journal*, 8, no. 11–12, 2005, 11–19.

the focal point, the government had been successful in keeping its tactics under the hood. Moreover, the strategies were kept hidden from everyone as well as the enemy because scrutiny and media coverage was avoided.

Media was transformed into a new era by the government of President Rajapakshe after observing all the above-mentioned shortcomings. In order to work in collaboration with the national media, the security forces attempted to introduce their propaganda wings and media, which resulted in all forms of media including the paper, electronic and web to work under a single umbrella providing much information of the current wars news. Furthermore, journalists were allowed to join in with the troops by the government so that they can report news directly from the battlefield, which turned out to be an immensely motivating factor for countrymen towards the war efforts. The government also used UAV for the purpose of showing as to how the operations have been progressing to international representatives, which was a positive step that was taken by the government that presents as to how the soldiers have sacrificed their lives in the process of rescuing innocent Tamil people from the custody of LTTE, thus, justifying the cause of Humanitarian Operation. However, the efforts to influence Western nations to rescue Prabahakaran and other cadres from the front line were continued by the sympathetic nations and people, which failed due to steady and strong policies of the government against terrorism.

The cutting of media pipeline was the smartest act of the government. The Tamil liberally assumed that the Western media was highly powerful and did not foresee the fact that the SLG was willing and capable of doing anything to gain its control. They relied on Western media for support of bringing about intervention.

The spirit that the security forces, eventually, proved to play a vital role and to foster public support was represented by the media campaign. The motivational levels of soldiers were high as their communities behind them, which was a novel initiative that proved decisive in generating motivation and gathering support for people.

C. CONCURRENT POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION AND REHABILITATION MECHANISMS

The process of transformation of developing countries in the 21st century to stable nations with democratic system demands careful planning of growth, a long-term and strong commitment to the process of nation building, and an intervention force of adequate size. This especially seems true in countries where the majority of people are divided on the basis of ethnicities and do not share an identical cultural history. Although, after complying with all these preconditions, the failure or success of an international intervention is basically reliant on both the capability of the intervention forces to set up stable and safe environment as well as undertaking of the legitimacy. Armed forces in Sri Lanka have assumed the leading role in ensuring internal security, whereas, the police force of Sri Lanka have increasingly become materialized. The armed forces of Sri Lanka (mainly police and military) have shortened their courses of training and shifted their complete focus on crushing any element or potential risk of insurgency. Meanwhile, the chiefs of government and security forces utilized all possible options to develop the capabilities of their men to actively participate in the reconstruction process after conflicts that cause destruction, by knowing the financial problems their country is facing. Moreover, the government came up with a plan for a speedy reconstruction and rehabilitation process using the security forces of the country. In the past, history documents no such initiative by the government to cope with a devastating economy.

Additionally, the fact has been recognized by the SLG that women, more than men, were diversely affected by the war. The issues of women were not only contained to the internal displacement, but also cover the livelihoods, war widows, violence based on gender and sexuality, among others. Realizing the facts, prominent and renowned women were chosen and a committee was established to work for the inclusion of issues related to gender in the process of peacemaking, including rehabilitation and reconstruction. The term of references of the committee, however, was intentionally left so that they could be formed after consultation with members in the first meeting. The efforts of the gender committee were acknowledged by everyone, because they began their functions effectively not only in the process of peacekeeping but in highlighting the common

grounds to strengthen the bond of sisterhood among women on both sides. International communities were always given importance by the SLG, which is reflected in involving the community in the peacekeeping process since the beginning. This also helped the SLG obtain support from the international community in the program of reconstruction.

The short-term benefit of the ceasefire for the people is that it strengthened the process of peacekeeping. The involvement of the international community is inevitable in accordance with the nature of the problem. In fact, the problem has become an international issue and many countries openly banned the LTTE as political actor, including India. There was the effect of the widespread and large Diaspora of Tamil population on the authorities of the states they are residing in. There were many countries in the world that had developed interest in demanding peace in Sri Lanka, which supported the involvement of international communities. The aid that government had received after the tsunami played a significant role in stabilizing the financial position of the government, which boosted the process of rehabilitation and reconstruction. The country suffered from the tsunami when the whole nation was still occupied with domestic crisis and civil wars.

When the affected community begins to move their life towards normalcy, the government has given attention on the basis of priority to the resettlement of displaced people during the war, rehabilitating and rebuilding the health and educational system and demining of the productive agriculture land. With the removal of the economic and trade barriers and the opening of the main national highway A9 of North (the highway was closed during the war for years to create a division between North and South), aid in the rapid economic and social reformation. The opening of the highway not only aid in integrating the two divided economies but also helps the government to create the environment of the reconciliation and peace among the people of South and North. After a long time, once again the Buddhist pilgrims were allowed to worship at the sacred locations of the pilgrimage for instance the Nagadipa Island off Jaffna peninsula with no impediment.

Likewise the pilgrims of Tamil community from North were also allowed to participate in the national level events and visit their sacred place in South like Kovil of

Kataragama. SLG established the highly desirable and needed mechanisms of institutions i.e. two Peace Secretariats. One secretariat represents the government side whereas other is utilized by LTTE for establishing contacts between both sides. The secretariats also offer their support to both parties both in term of logistic and substantive manner. A Muslim Peace Secretariat was also established by the SLG. The sub-committees of both sides actively worked on the issue of concerns like de-escalation of issues related to gender and assessing and providing the need for rehabilitation via coordinated efforts from both sides.

Though, the Eelam war IV has adversely affected the rehabilitation and reconstruction process, however, the government has maintain her efforts for peace keeping, which substantially aid in rehabilitating internally displaced people, during humanitarian organization. LTTE started to function as more of a conventional force in opposition to SLA, than as an insurgence unit using asymmetrical tactics. Contrasting to the actual objectives and goals, insurgent has started to focus more on developing kinetics and conventional capacity. David Galula in Counterinsurgency Warfare has comprehensively addressed this phenomenon: Theory and Practice. Galula in his book explains the decreasing importance of the cause of insurgency.

The cause that forms the foundation of a movement is a critically important element. It forms the fundamental building block on which the insurgency assisting the movement is based. However, the importance of the cause experiences a decline as the power of the insurgency continues to increase with the passage of time. At one point, the cause is forgotten and sidelined, leaving behind the singular purpose of winning the war. As a direct result, the population begins to take sides that tend to be based on the degree to which the population perceives the two sides.

The political capacity was seriously undermined by the presence of the LTTE's kinetic abilities. As a result, the support for the LTTE began to experience a significant deterioration. As a result, Eelam IV became a turning point; particularly when perceived within the frame of reference of events that took place from 2006 to 2009. Lionel Beehner's perspective on the usage of COIN by Sri Lanka at this point in time is of significant relevance. The perspective holds that the LTTE had the advantage of a

complete military wing that constituted ground, air, and sea forces. The LTTE had as many as 20,000 conscripts who were not only trained but also heavily trained. The purchase of equipment such as GPRS systems helped the Tigers become proficient in conventional warfare as well as in the area of guerilla warfare. The Sri Lankan army always seemed to be one step behind the LTTE.¹²⁹

Summarily, the government managed to make use of the media when they finally managed to depict the soldiers on the front lines as heroes of the nation. This allowed the government to portray Tamil actions as atrocities that needed to be brought to a stop. The government began slowly at first, and then accelerated its usage of the media as a weapon in the war. This turned the tables on the LTTE. This allowed the SLG to regain the support that it had desperately needed during the initial course of the war. The reconstruction program was greatly strengthened as a result of this strategy.

¹²⁹ Sharika Thiranagama, "In Praise of Traitors: Intimacy, Betrayal, and the Sri Lankan Tamil Community," in *Traitors: Suspicion, Intimacy and the Ethics of State Building*, Thiranagama S. and Tobias Kelly (eds.) (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 44–50.

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VI. ANALYSIS OF EELAM WAR IV STRATEGIES AND COIN PRINCIPLES

The counterinsurgency philosophy discusses the basic measures, which can be adopted to win the counterinsurgency war. However, during the insurgent rule of the Tamil Tigers, certain counterinsurgency strategies of the Sri Lankan government have not yet been written or discussed in detail so far. Therefore, these counterinsurgency strategies are regarded as newly formulated tactics or strategies which were implemented to win the Sri Lankan war of Eelam.

A lot of effort has been invested in the intelligence aspect of counterinsurgency principles, which is a clear indication of its importance.¹³⁰ However, while military forces have needed to work out intelligence networks, insurgent organizations need fewer or no third- party or technology assistance, and so have direct access to all intelligence aspects.¹³¹ However, regarding real-time human intelligence (HUMINT), many believe that it paves the way to the success of humanitarian operations.

Basically, the reason behind the insurgency in the Sri Lankan northern and eastern regions was due to the ethnic discrimination of Tamil civilians over the years. Sri Lankan government, which was primarily dominated by the Sinhalese, carried on its ethno-nationalist discrimination and racially prejudiced policies towards the Tamil minority. The country of Sri Lanka is largely comprised of two competing ethnic populations, Sinhalese and Tamil. Both these populations derive their cultural roots from the greater Indian sub-continent. However, over the past several centuries, these ethnicities have grown to develop their own societal norms and values.

Beginning in the seventeenth century, Western powers from Europe began to influence the area through trading and the establishment of schools and missions. Eventually, the British Empire formally colonized the island in the 19th century. While

¹³⁰ Counter Insurgency Operations: AFM Vol (B), (Colombo, Sri Lanka: Defense Services Command and Staff Collage, Sri Lanka, 2005), 4–1–22.

¹³¹ Randi Borchardt, "Counter Terrorist Policy in Comparative Perspective," Monterey, CA, February 15, 2011. Views expressed during lecture conducted to NS3801 course at NPS.

still under control of the British Empire, the Tamil minority was at times disproportionately over-represented in the colonial administrative government along with the Christian/Westernized Sinhalese elite.

Within Sri Lanka, the Sinhalese population is the largest group. The majority of the Sri Lankan Sinhalese lives in the southern and western portions of the island. Of particular importance to Sinhalese Sri Lankans is their Buddhist tradition. In the decades following independence from Great Britain, the mobilization of Sinhalese citizens through social structures within the Buddhist faith played a central role in the eventual marginalization of Sri Lankan Tamils, leading to radicalization and militarization of Tamil groups. The Sri Lankan Tamil people represent approximately 13 percent of the population. Members of this ethnic group reside mainly in the northern and eastern portions of the country. However, there is a small Sri Lankan Tamil community with large business holdings in Colombo.

Since a large part of the Sri Lankan population was Sinhalese, therefore, soon after the Sri Lankan independence in the year 1948, they immediately controlled country's authority. After taking control of the country's power they launched a number of laws, which provoked ethnic discrimination. These laws were formulated to benefit the Sinhalese majority and completely excluded the Tamil and other ethnic minorities. During the seventies, after struggling for years of social and political turmoil and conflict, the Tamil civilians became frustrated by these discriminating behaviours of Sinhalese and formed both legal as well as illegal movements for resisting Sinhalese power. The seventies had very limited amount of violent riots, however, in the eighties the violent riots were escalated by the Tamil resistance which were aimed against the Sri Lankan Sinhalese government.

In July of 1983, these small but violent riots late became fully blown guerrilla war. The Tamil rebels, who were brought under one umbrella of the Liberation Tamil Tigers of Eelam (LTTE), also known as the Tamil Tigers, murdered 13 Sinhalese military and armed officers, the Tamil region of Jaffna. The largest and most damaging riot came in 1983, which signalled not only the apex of anti-Tamil ethnic violence to date, but radicalized many Tamils against the Sri Lankan state. This event sparked many violent

riots, which spread throughout the country and caused created two antagonistic groups within the nation. Most accounts describe the riots as a Sinhalese reaction to the death of 13 Sri Lankan soldiers, who were killed in an ambush in northern Sri Lanka by the fledgling Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). From July 24 to August 5, Sinhalese mobs attacked and destroyed Tamil businesses, killed Tamils and burned homes. The reported death toll varies widely dependent upon the source, with numbers anywhere from 350–2000 killed.¹³² The after effects of the riots were also devastating.¹³³ The number of refugees was estimated at 79,000 to 80,000. The formation of camps to house the refugees created long-term suffering as these Tamils had nowhere to turn because their entire livelihoods had been destroyed. This marked the beginning of LTTE's aim of overthrowing government and gain independence in northeast of Sri Lanka. A charismatic leader, what many of his devoted followers called, Velupillai Prabhakarn, led the Tamil Tigers. The Tamil Tigers used far-spreading terrorism and used guerrilla war strategies against the public as well as the targeted government officials. This resulted in gory riots for two decades (i.e., throughout the eighties and the nineties). The government of Sri Lanka involved international communities to in order to overpower the rising LTTE insurgency. In the later years of the nineties, the LTTE and the Sri Lankan government agreed on a temporary ceasefire. Due to this agreement, there was an unconvincing cessation of hostilities for almost six years. However, in the spring of 2006, violent riots again erupted when the Tamil Tigers carried out a suicidal attack on the Army Headquarters, which was situation in the Sri Lankan capital Colombo.

When President Rajapaksa took over in the year 2005, he promised to create a rejoiced nation with no sign of the Tamil Tigers,¹³⁴ which echoed with the voices of the devastated nation. Sri Lankan President Rajapaksa, after coming into power in 2005, attempted to transform the features of the government and leadership entirely and employed the similar guerrilla warfare strategies that were adopted by the Tamil Tigers in the previous three wars of Eelam. The government also attempted to employ the

¹³² Swamy, *The Tiger Vanquished: LTTE's Story*, 100–276.

¹³³ Fair, "Diaspora Involvement in Insurgencies," 125–156.

¹³⁴ C. Manogaran, *The Sri Lankan Tamils, Ethnicity and Identity* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994), 25–43.

strategies, which the Tamil Tigers were using through the prolonged war, which resulted in violent streaks, along with militant propaganda, and innovative guerrilla warfare strategies.¹³⁵

In the year 2009, Sri Lankan government was able to militarily defeat Tamil insurgent forces, known as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). Despite the fact that Sri Lanka is a developing nation, the insurgents maintained this war through resources that came to a large extent from external sources. In May of 2009, after a two-and-a-half year military offensive, the Sri Lankan Armed Forces surrounded the last of the insurgents. The LTTE was once a unit of over 10,000 battle-hardened guerrillas. However, the remnants that attempted this act of desperation consisted of many conscripted young children, who held civilians as human shields. Meanwhile, their core leadership made desperate calls from their makeshift bunkers for American or British protection upon surrender. Arguably, they were only a shell of what was once considered to be one of the most feared insurgent movements of the modern age. This last stand resulted in the death and capture of the last of the holdouts. As proof of the insurgency's demise, a photo of LTTE leader Vellupillai Prabhakaran was released, with a bullet hole in his forehead. Selvarasa Pathmanathan, the head of the LTTE's international diplomatic relations committee, released the following statement: "we have already announced to the world our position to silence our guns to save our people."¹³⁶ With that statement, the Tamil Tigers admitted to a military defeat and the longest running war in South Asia came to an end after 25 years of gruesome devastation.

Since uprisings almost surely will continue to pose significant domestic and foreign policy challenges, counterinsurgency strategies are politically activated campaigns, which exploits all the elements of the country in order to eradicate the insurgent group.¹³⁷ Although, combating insurgent groups require military resources to counteract, however, certain non-military resources should also be used to counterbalance. These non-military strategies include re-establishing the local authority,

¹³⁵ Millen, *Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam*.

¹³⁶ Scoop World, "LTTE

¹³⁷ Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, 62–63.

reforming economy or development of infrastructure.¹³⁸ Although, combating insurgent groups through military resources is more direct, certain non-military resources focus on the civilians so that the country's legitimacy can be enhanced and the support for the insurgent groups can be reduced.¹³⁹ The insurgent groups and the counterinsurgency strategies combat in order to win the hearts and minds of the civilians.

A. WINNING COIN STRATEGIES: THE SRI LANKA SCENARIO

The response of a government to domestic challenges has a major impact on the span and result of the insurgency war. The counterinsurgency publication explains that the current counterinsurgency guidelines, principles and strategies were actually based on the three decade old British experiences. It included political dominance, political objective, synchronized government and administration, intelligence services, separation of support for insurgent groups, counterbalancing the insurgent groups and long run planning for post insurgency. As the country's administration counterbalances the rising insurgency on their land, they also have to undergo strategic decision making in order to implement strategic counterinsurgency measures. It is a common logic that these rebellious uprisings can be easily eradicated when they are in their initial stages. As these insurgencies develop in numbers and their capacity to wreak havoc increase, it becomes difficult for the government to eradicate. Using the case of Sri Lankan insurgency and the measures that the government adopted to eradicate them, other states can also implement those strategies to eradicate the insurgent forces when they are in their budding phases. Eradicating the insurgency when they are budding is also crucial for the global war against terrorism. After considering many challenges on global war against insurgency and Sri Lankan case study, the writer has extracted following strategies which can be used to counterbalance the rising insurgent groups.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 63.

¹³⁹ U.S. Army, Field Manual 3-24:Counter Insurgency,1-1.

B. GOVERNMENT LEGITIMACY

According to the model Manwaring, which is the most vital aspect, explains the success and failure of counter-insurgency. Legitimacy of state increases and maintains support of the nation in the fight against the insurgency. They undermine the legitimacy of the state, and reduce the confidence and credibility of the public. However, general phenomena is governments must put all possible efforts to enhance legitimacy among the countrymen. These procedures include the Government to take efficient measures to provide safety and effective authority to meet the resident's basic desires. The four prolonged wars of Eelam, which were fought between the Sri Lankan government and its rivalry evidence that in situations like these the government should deploy the best counterinsurgency measures to defeat the insurgent rebels. The first three wars of Eelam were not successful because the Sri Lankan government failed to bring down the rising insurgency of the Tamil Tigers. All the previous three wars ended with peace talks between the government and the insurgent groups. Since these peace negotiations were not successful, they resulted in a subsequent war. The fourth and final war of Eelam was successfully turned around the situation when the Sri Lankan government deployed the counterinsurgency strategies to its full capacity. Although, combating insurgent groups require military resources to counteract, however, certain non-military resources should also be used to counterbalance. These non-military strategies include re-establishing the local authority, reforming economy or development of infrastructure.¹⁴⁰ Although, combating insurgent groups through military resources is more direct, certain non-military resources focus on the civilians so that the country's legitimacy can be enhanced and the support for the insurgent groups can be reduced.¹⁴¹ The insurgent groups and the counterinsurgency strategies combat in order to win the hearts and minds of the civilians.

C. UNITY OF EFFORT

Counter-insurgency involves a unified effort and movement combine military and political measures, as well as social, and economic, and aims for a general goal for all

¹⁴⁰ U.S. Army, Field Manual 3-24:Counter Insurgency,1-1.

¹⁴¹ U.S. Army, Field Manual 3-24:Counter Insurgency,1-1.

levels. This involves civilian and military harmony, and the aim of resolving the conflict to the synchronization of the causes of the insurgency. Explicit attention is given on efforts to lead the country to combat the insurgency. Those actions are reviewed, which appear conflicting in the strategic objectives of the government.

The root cause of Sri Lankan government's action to overturn the stands and alter the outlook of war, was because of the lessons learned from the past mistakes and stupidity. The government from the previous three wars, and a careful analysis of psychological warfare, military equipment and tactics learned profound lessons. In winning over the LTTE, the Army adopted the warfare strategy mastered by the LTTE, and started using those to supplement its major manoeuvre operations against the attacks carried out by LTTE who were also later became to use conventional strategy. The government also attempted to employ the strategies that the Tamil Tigers were using through the prolonged war, which resulted in violent streaks, along with militant propaganda and innovative guerrilla warfare strategies. The Sri Lankan government primarily focused on strategies to bring the entire nation under one umbrella by utilising the strategy of winning the hearts and minds of the nation and defeat the Tamil insurgency as a united nation. The Sri Lankan army further incorporated effective and strategic operations to counteract the threats that were posed by the Tamil Tigers.¹⁴² Due to this, the Tamil Tigers had to rethink the strategies they need to adopt; they chose the traditional rebel strategies, which was in complete contrast to their more conventional strategies. In general, the entire counterinsurgency strategy of Sri Lankan government was to overwhelm the Tamil Tigers with the combined impact of both conventional as well as guerrilla combat strategies. Massive coordinated missile attacks were also launched effectively to target the Tamil Tigers. The main reason behind the success was President Rajapaksa's motive that professionals to lead the war with no interferences. During these successful operations the Tamil Tigers were defeated because they did not anticipate the strength of the superior opponent and did not revise their strategies. They also did not anticipate the new tactics and strategies that were adopted by the armed forces of Sri Lanka.

¹⁴² Coats, *Suppressing Insurgency*, 223.

D. POLITICAL PRIMACY IN COUNTERINSURGENCY STRATEGY

Root causes, the politics should sustain prevalence countering insurgency operation. As military campaigns are mandatorily required to fight with vicious acts conducted by rebel troops, the overall strategic plan should not overlook the country's legitimacy. According to U.S. Army Field Manual 3-24, "resolving most insurgencies requires a political solution; it is thus imperative that counterinsurgent actions do not hinder achieving that political solution."

Government's policies processes are reassessed to find out the effect of designed operations are fulfilling major political aims. Such a military campaign that does not appear to be promising shows that political primacy has been overlooked in making the state counterinsurgency strategy.

The military and political leadership played the best role out of the COIN principles for the government in winning the war. The political objectives were clearly set in the period from 2006–2009. The government constantly presented apparent aims to the Sri Lankan Armed Forces and provided a full support to their mission from the start to end, in every aspect. Despite of the absence of well-built LTTE leadership in the East, the combatants went on fighting like a conservative force instead of a rebellious group—a major strategic blunder as the Tamil Tigers no longer had enough force to take on a usual battle.¹⁴³

At the time when Mahinda Rajapaksa came up as the head of state in November 2005, the LTTE had a control on large parts of region in the northern areas. As any terrorist organization, LTTE also enhanced and maintained their fighting strength, combat power, capabilities and success, which truly affected to change the political will of the country to resource the armed forces. Ironically, the operational and tactical victories of Prabhakaran helped reserve the SLAF reaction to 26 years of hostility.¹⁴⁴ This new political trend let the brothers Rajapaksa to shift to latest, more expensive forms of war that consisted more of advance technology cum RMAs I, II and III. In comparison,

¹⁴³ O'Balance, *The Cyanide War*, 11–26.

¹⁴⁴ Schneier, *Beyond Fear*, 12–99.

the attraction of a separate country, together with its associated conservative force arrangement, proved very much off-putting for Prabhakaran in the end. Instead of relapsing to an RMA-II, Maoist stance, LTTE made efforts to hold territory against a greater SLAF.¹⁴⁵

E. SECURITY UNDER THE RULE OF LAW

Livelihood safety is the major constituent of defeating the insurgency that improves state authenticity and averts development of rebels' existence. Victorious measures executed under the law and order guarantee human rights, achieve admired support for the government and restrict the insurgent field of pressure. The contemplation of rights abuses is examined. Suppressive approaches, draconian safety rules, and inhabitant wrongdoings point out to a collapse in ensuring efficient livelihood security.

Island nation has made vociferous progress in the fields of direct humanitarian aid to IDPs, rehabilitation and demining of infrastructure, relocation of IDPs, rehabilitation of ex-combatants, converting a combating force to state developers, development of livelihood, refurbishment of security situation and autonomous establishments and plans of continuing economic growth schemes. The improvement is attained under complex and difficult setting and with inadequate facilities on hand.

In Sri Lanka the "Triple R" program, which stands for Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconciliation, had been widely conversed among the citizens during the former government, was commenced in the regions of the east and north and in the four neighbouring regions that had also been under the effect of the conflict.

F. EXTENT OF EXTERNAL SUPPORT FOR THE STATE

Support from external players may be in several forms that include financial assistance, advisor support, direct armed forces intrusion. The government in need may be given this support through associated governments, bordering states, the UN, or non-state agencies that are experts in handling conflicts. The incidence and nature of external

¹⁴⁵ Peiris, "Clandestine Transactions of the LTTE," 1–23.

support is assessed in each scenario. External support is carefully assessed to find out its level of usefulness in recuperating state counterinsurgency competence.

Great external support from Pakistan, China, India and reasonable support from other Western states also obtained due to those strategies even government had to bear significant pressure as a result of numerous accusations constructed by the Tamil Diaspora.¹⁴⁶ Besides the support of war on terrorism by United States, gaining worldwide support was a clever move as well. As the SLG managed to obtain support of Russia and China, two enduring affiliates of the Security Council and preserving of Indo-Lanka relation, in the proper manner to Sri Lankan government, approached on crushing country's terrorism. This proved to be a very tactical role in preventing and opposing Western pressures. "In early [months] of 2006, the Sri Lanka Defense Ministry, led by President Rajapaksa's brother, Gotabaya Rajapaksa, and the Sri Lankan Army (SLA), [initiated offensives] against the LTTE."¹⁴⁷

Throughout the former battles, India had always intervened with the armed struggles claiming that east/north Tamil population were pestered and effected by the actions of forces, but in the Eelam War IV, India sustained a helpful part. This was a splendid success of the political headship. Ministry of Defense constantly informed Indian authorities with the occurring operational circumstances, which facilitated to develop a good military and political relationship between the two states.

G. ABILITY TO REDUCE EXTERNAL SUPPORT TO THE INSURGENT

Insurgent troops look for outside support to acquire material, diplomatic, and political programme in promoting their cause. Insurgent troops may obtain favours from both non-state and state players concerned to the cause of the insurgents. The existence and level of outside support to the insurgent is regarded. Government's remedies to fight with outside support are reviewed as an element in diminishing insurgent potential.

¹⁴⁶ Smith, "The Eelam Endgame?" 67–112.

¹⁴⁷ Thiranagama, *In Praise of Traitors*, 46.

Indian Premiere Gandhi emerged as considerate to the Tamil root and proposed India's willingness of arbitration headed for a political resolution. In July 1987, Sri Lanka and India signed Indo-Lanka Accord with the aim of attaining harmony between the Sri Lankan Government and LTTE. The agreement laid down the acknowledgment of the Northeast as historical territories of the Tamil natives. This contentious recognition brought in aggressive oppositions by the civilians of Sinhalese.

To fight with a rising threat, the President Jayawardena pleaded military aid from the neighbour India. From 1988 to 1990, Indian military, in the name of IPKF held the North and East, Tamil pre-dominancy of Sri Lanka. And they carried out operations against insurgents.

H. COUNTERINSURGENCY PRINCIPLES AND THEIR APPLICATION IN SRI LANKA

A clear indication of the importance of the intelligence facet of counterinsurgency principals is the volume of efforts invested in it.¹⁴⁸ Almost all of the internal and external legal security forces need to develop intelligence plans, either using technology or through third the assistance of various third parties. In contrast, insurgency groups do not need to rely on technology or third parties and therefore have direct access to all aspects of the current intelligence.¹⁴⁹ When it comes to human intelligence, many see real time human intelligence (HUMINT) as integral to the success of humanitarian operations. In my opinion, all external forces see HUMINT as a major drawback. This is due to the reluctance of these forces in employment of the native forces for this purpose. Mainly this is due to both the absence of confidence and lack of support from the local population. In counter insurgency intelligence operations, the role of technology is crucial. Both lawfully authorized forces and insurgents make the most of the available technological systems, often freely available in the region.¹⁵⁰ The limitations of the

¹⁴⁸ *Counter Insurgency Operations: AFM Vol (B)* (Colombo, Sri Lanka: Defense Services Command and Staff Collage, Sri Lanka, 2005), 4–1–9.

¹⁴⁹ Randi Borchardt, "Counter Terrorist Policy in Comparative Perspective," Monterey, CA, February 15, 2011. Views expressed during lecture conducted to NS3801 course at NPS.

¹⁵⁰ Dickinson, *USAF The Military Role in Countering Terrorist Use of Weapons of Mass Destruction*, 23–28.

technology come to forefront when selection for the systems appropriate for the operations is concerned. The systems must be viable both operationally and financially and must prove efficient and profitable while in use during the operations. Affordability is a key factor for any country that is looking to use it in any counterinsurgency effort.

As per my research, a concentrated use of media and propaganda has not been employed as a main factor by any nation,¹⁵¹ but there have been cases of its use for winning the populace. This proved to be a major factor in the Sri Lankan War. Both printed and electronic media can play a pivotal task in the progress of any engagement, battle and campaign. Any campaign, battle of engagement can benefit from the role of media and propaganda. Thus, the appropriate transfer of information (real time works best) to the people of the world is a must for success. This also has the advantage of negating or damping out the workings and capabilities of the terrorist media and its propaganda. This is a critical factor for success for any media campaign. Another aspect of this real time transfer of news is that it allows government's campaign to follow its course without outside interference. Indeed, as the experience has shown, it can prove to be a source of positive support for the operations. To win a war, proper cooperation and coordination of the entire government machinery and all the political agencies is required.¹⁵² Although this point is known and understood by many in the field, past narrative does not present convincing evidence that this principle has been used or employed with success. Most of the campaigns fought by external armies have faced adequate problems with joined efforts, since coalition forces used to adhere and fallow completely diverse strategies, instructions and ideologies within the common purpose.¹⁵³ Similar set of circumstances were noticed even with domestic forces when bearing in mind elements in support of the background work. Additionally, there was no substantial verification throughout the review of literature, which suggests that any coalition, agency or country, had developed successful post conflict methods that forms a part of any

¹⁵¹ ErIk Claessen, Military Review, 1–3.

¹⁵² News California.com, "A Comparative Essay: Counterinsurgency and Stability Operations Case Histories Studies Vietnam Iraq," Accessed August 30, 2011, from <http://news-california.com/?p=1158>.

¹⁵³ Scott McMichael, "The Soviet Army, Counterinsurgency and the Afghan War," Parameters (December 1989), 21-35.

counterinsurgency plan. However, it was in post-conflict plan for the employment of the fourth stage of the process in Sri Lanka, and illustrates the importance of political stability, and wins the battle.¹⁵⁴ The approach of Sri Lankan authorities in Eelam War IV has drawn the anger of considerable concerns of international society.¹⁵⁵ The international nations, Western in particular, have not shown any concern for the causes of the Sri Lankan government.

All the time, the Sri Lankan government opted to continue chasing the military strategy for eradicating the Tamil Tigers, using standard operating procedures. Furthermore, the Sri Lankan government also faced defeat in expanding its tactics beyond the military strategies and developing international socioeconomic and political elements of counterbalancing the insurgent attacks. For instance, the government of Sri Lanka failed to provide a reasonable and alternative direction to the Tamil community, who were in the middle of the war between the Tamil Tigers and the Sri Lankan government and suffered the most. The government of Sri Lanka also failed to take drastic measures to ease the distress of the Tamil community in the two provinces the North and the East regions. Additionally, the speed at which the counterinsurgency strategies were executed was quite slow and insufficient to counterbalance the ever-increasing international and local threat by the Tamil Tigers. The Armed and Military forces of Sri Lanka deployed a combined RMA strategy, which included RMA I, RMA III and RMA IV. The war inclined more towards the guerrilla methods of warfare in order to counterbalance the combined RMA strategies of the Tamil Tigers. The Sri Lankan army further incorporated effective and strategic operations to counteract the threats, which were posed by the Tamil Tigers. Due to this, the Tamil Tigers had to rethink the strategies they need to adopt; they chose the traditional rebel strategies, which was in complete contrast to their more conventional strategies. Although Sri Lankan troops “morale was still high, it prompted the Government of Sri Lanka and Sri Lankan military to show great interest in maintaining the morale and pride of the soldiers since

¹⁵⁴ Media Center Sri Lanka, “Media Center for National Development for Sri Lanka, August 18, 2010,” accessed March 05, 2011, from <http://www.development.lk/news.php?news=786>.

¹⁵⁵ Peiris, “Clandestine Transactions of the LTTE,” 1–23.

the diverse situation of the Vietnam war, which has been a very non-traditional war. Two different methods were employed: materialistic, and non- materialistic.¹⁵⁶ First, the government of Sri Lanka decided on the materialistic factors to sustain the morale of the soldiers by increasing the payment and reimbursements. Second, the leaders of the government of Sri Lanka focused on the non- materialistic factors to sustain the morale and pride of the soldiers. Government of Sri Lanka began to realize that it will take more hard work, and participation in the conduct of calculated guerrilla warfare. “They urged Korean soldiers to take pride in them about their missions and recognise themselves as ‘freedom crusaders,’ not ‘mercenaries.’”¹⁵⁷

The COIN military forces comprised of very experienced, sophisticated and well trained officers who had the ability to operate separately for a little time. These soldiers can be pushed into the forests in the beginning of the battle. Commandos and special military forces can be sent after them for support to catch Tamil tiger off guard and defeat them.¹⁵⁸ These restructuring made “Sri Lankan army that [eradicate] the LTTE out of the eastern, then northern province.”¹⁵⁹ First, centralisation under one command, and decentralisation based on SIOT, functioned as the flexible organisation. The Sri Lankan army further incorporated effective and strategic operations to counteract the threats, which were posed by the Tamil Tigers. Due to this, the Tamil Tigers had to rethink the strategies they needed to adopt; they chose the traditional rebel strategies, which was in complete contrast to their more conventional strategies.

However, when Sri Lankan President Rajapaksa took power in 2005, the Tamil Tigers were able to capture vast territories in the northern regions of Killinochchi, Mullaithivu, and a few areas of Mannar. LTTE had no problem finding recruits, as many Tamils who did not flee with the Diaspora volunteered after witnessing the atrocities committed against them. With notable exceptions, a combination of LTTE

¹⁵⁶ Cohen and Gooch, *Military Misfortunes*, 45–90.

¹⁵⁷ Fair, “Diaspora Involvement in Insurgencies,” 23–33.

¹⁵⁸ Chalk, “Commentary No. 77: Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam’s (LTTE) International Organization and Operations.”

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

“salesmanship,” coupled with the geographic separation of the Diaspora from everyday events in northern Sri Lanka, has allowed this perception largely to remain within the Diaspora, facilitating the continual flow of funding and political support. The decision of Prabhakaran to hold strategically significant territories proved to be the reason for the demise of the Tamil Tigers. The Armed and Military forces of Sri Lanka deployed a combined RMA strategy, which included RMA I, RMA III and RMA IV. The war inclined more towards the guerrilla methods of warfare in order to counterbalance the combined RMA strategies of the Tamil Tigers. In contrast, the lure of Tamil native soil Eelam, side by side with the traditional power structure associated, distracted Prabhakaran too much. Instead of returning to the RMA-II, and the Maoist situation, Prabhakaran LTTE tried to grasp ground against the supreme Sri Lankan Armed Forces. Thus, reducing size, and not the region was the goal of Rajapaksa, the Sri Lankan President, which seemed to not reach a conformity, was far from attractive for the nation. Later, flaws in the shield of the Tamil Tigers began to appear.¹⁶⁰ This was not so much as a result of the LTTE’s early transformation to Mao’s Phase III, but because during successful operations by the Sri Lankan government, the Tamil Tigers were defeated because they did not anticipate the strength of their superior opponent and did not revise their strategies. They also did not anticipate the new tactics and strategies that were adopted by the military and armed forces of Sri Lanka. Prabhakaran underestimated the strength of Sri Lanka’s armed forces fully capable of RMA I, RMA III, and RMA IV strategies and opted to capture strategically significant regions. Brilliant counteracting techniques will always defeat flawed strategies. Prabhakaran failed to anticipate the strength of the superior opponent forces. He did not formulate a defensive strategy and a support strategy, which the militant or rebel forces required during the insurgency movements. The Armed and Military forces of Sri Lanka deployed a combined RMA strategy, which included RMA I, RMA III, and RMA IV. The war inclined more towards the guerrilla methods of warfare in order to counterbalance the combined RMA strategies of the Tamil Tigers.

¹⁶⁰ Peiris, “Clandestine Transactions of the LTTE,” 1–23.

Finally, the counterinsurgency philosophy discusses the basic measures which can be adopted to win the counterinsurgency war. However, during the insurgent rule of the Tamil Tigers, certain counterinsurgency strategies of the Sri Lankan government have not yet been written or discussed in detail so far. Therefore, these counterinsurgency strategies are regarded as newly formulated tactics or strategies, which were implemented to win the Sri Lankan war of Eelam. Some of the strategies of the regime were concerned with gaining the support of the people and winning their hearts. However, while this tactic contributed to the success of the fourth phase of the Sri Lankan campaign, it was overlooked in the literature as one of the principles of improved counterinsurgency techniques employed by Sri Lanka. The study analyses how the learned lessons were expedited efficiently and were utilized during subsequent wars. Most of the publications saw that after formulating counterinsurgency fundamentals, no in-depth study has been carried out to re-draft the policies to make them pertinent to contemporary insurgencies.¹⁶¹ The reshaping of any principle should be universal, allowing its application to be relevant to the scenario of any internal conflict. At present, existing strategies and countermeasures are either out dated, or are something completely new, or are polished from combat to combat but are not solid.¹⁶² Hence it is important to analyse and find the suitability of those principles for contemporary internal engagement.

The study explains that counterinsurgency experts and theorists alike have to be careful when setting up processes and approaches. They might hold onto the key aim of population-centric counterinsurgency and the gaining of the insurgent population's support and sympathies, but they should not rigidly restrict the way they attain the goal of population-centric tactics and operations. As a result, these understandings garnered from the Sri Lankan case help us realise that it is necessary to modify current counterinsurgency standards.

¹⁶¹ Alexandra, *The Validity of British Army Counterinsurgency Doctrine*.

¹⁶² Ibid.; Byman, *The Five Front War*, 81–82.

VII. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. CONCLUSION

The brutality, never ending hostility, and mass devastation conducted by the Tamil Tigers disrupted the rulers—and the entire Sri Lankan nation—to the core. This study attempts to understand how the Sri Lankan approach changed after numerous long wars (which each concluded with the government's whitewash) and was finally able to succeed. The insurgency war lasted for almost 25 years in Sri Lanka. After all these years of targeted attacks, suicide terror campaigns, bombings, and murder attempts on civilians, high profile government officials, and famous people, the military and armed forces of Sri Lanka were finally successful in eradicating the insurgent Tamil Tigers from the country in the year 2009.¹⁶³ Ever since Sri Lanka succeeded in defeating the Tamil Tigers using revised counterinsurgency (COIN) strategies, experts are attempting to identify the method, which the Sri Lankan government adopted to successfully eradicate the domestic conflict. The success of the counterinsurgency (COIN) strategy adopted by Sri Lanka is a result of mixed strategies such as government legitimacy, external support of governments, unity of effort, competency of reducing external support to the militant groups, intelligence, and brave and capable military forces. A mixture of key issues, including legitimacy, unity of effort, external support, the ability to reduce outside aid to the terrorists, intelligence, media and propaganda, and capable military—these are the answers for my first two questions—and purposes of—this research: what enabled Sri Lanka to succeed in Elam War IV, and what were the critical differences from the three previous phases? Finally, I believe that existing COIN principles, strategies, and doctrines need to be reassessed as suitable to the contemporary environment of the conflict, as well as on the basis of internal or external factors. However, the process of examining past counterinsurgency (COIN) strategies to analyse the major elements which helped in explaining the failure or victory of the counterinsurgency (COIN) principles is

¹⁶³ Swamy, *The Tiger Vanquished: LTTE's Story*, xvii.

vital, and it is also crucial to extract the key lessons learned during the past domestic conflicts to devise more effective future strategies for counterinsurgency. This may be a task for future research.

According to my early research, no country has so far focused on employment of propaganda and media as a major aspect, but some have used it as a part of the standard of conquering the minds and hearts of the nation. Throughout the Sri Lankan war, this method was used as the key feature.

Rebels exploit ferocity to achieve political objectives through armed struggle. “States must devise counterinsurgency strategy based on legitimacy, effective security, and attention to the economic, social, and political causes of insurgent actions.”¹⁶⁴ Without these components, governments are destined to experience a lengthy internal war. At the operational level, governments must introduce effective tools such as civilian auxiliaries that enhance, and not harm, state legitimacy. The accountability of counter-insurgent forces is a crucial task, which provides for reviewing these declarations on a regular basis. Keeping in mind the elements of security—political harmony, good governance, reforms in economy and civil development—as a whole, the state should devise effective measures to reinforce political objectives with the mission to formulate counter-insurgent actions side by side.¹⁶⁵ The tangible and measurable results of such actions would guarantee the state’s capability to counteract the insurgencies prevalent in its economy, and weaken the support bases of prominent internal movements. The attempt to develop counter-insurgency acts starts with the development of a plan that is conveyed across different channels and parties of the state. These plans must integrate all the political and military officials who can produce collective outcomes on the success of counter-insurgent plans.¹⁶⁶ A consistent counter-insurgency plan guarantees sound counter-insurgency decisions in the future, provided that it is formulated with clinical precision and expertise. The government agencies and other officials of the state must

¹⁶⁴ Smith, “The Eelam Endgame?” 98.

¹⁶⁵ Cohen and Gooch, *Military Misfortunes*, 45–90.

¹⁶⁶ *Counter Insurgency Operations* (Silhert, Bangladesh: School of Infantry and Tactics, Special Warfare Wing, 1998), 1–4.

also understand the fact that counter-insurgency does not happen overnight; it requires relentless efforts over a longer period of time. This understanding is more important within the presidential sector where each individual undertakes different methods and strategies for conflict resolutions. Presidential administrations need to develop an understanding that such efforts will not prove futile, provided they are long-term and tested for their competencies.

A government's counterterrorism effort should be able to sustain pressure on the terrorists through nonstop tri-forces and police operations executed within a wider political strategy. It is very crucial to devise mechanisms that measure and hold the political strategy's alignment with military operations under accountability for continuous progress to counter-act insurgencies. In addition to developing a sound military force, it is also imperative to devise forces that support human rights protection within the state. If the state engages itself in tyrannical attempts in its military operations; it would validate the insurgent actions and violate the objective of a peaceful resolution of political and social conflicts that may arise.

As negotiations play a vital role in the overall strategy, policy makers must regularly monitor and balance military offensives with diplomatic support. New strategies were developed focusing on diplomacy, strategic, tactical and operational maneuvers, intelligence, use of technology, media and propaganda, political aim and will, gaining population support, humanitarian aspects, along with other strategies. The "role of diplomacy and negotiation requires further study as a state counterinsurgency tool."¹⁶⁷

Negotiations play an important role in resolving internal conflicts while maintaining the interests of both the parties at the same time. Insurgent leadership ends faster as a result of an effective resolution to domestic struggles than by other means, provided it is followed by considerate and sincere discussions with thoughtfulness for each other's interests. According to Bard O'Neil, if the authorities misidentified the nature of insurgency that is penetrative in the state, it can deviate from adopting a cost-effective method to shun insurgencies, and hence, resort to costly means. It is better to

¹⁶⁷ Swamy, *The Tiger Vanquished: LTTE's Story*, 128.

study each situation in a comprehensive manner, and customize the response in a rational and tactful manner. While O’Neil’s statement is primarily based on gaining wider support for a cause, it also holds true for winning the game in negotiations.

The works of Bard O’Neill and David Galula were amongst the most prominent and famous works regarding counterinsurgency that do not put a focus on this crucial tool of counter-insurgency. However, the most widely used and popular works have given a lot of stress to the non-military measures of counterinsurgency—through the approach of winning minds and hearts—and have always stressed that dialogues with the insurgents have to be regarded as a crucial part of these measures, which could be described as non-military.¹⁶⁸ Scholars and practitioners who have worked on the topic of counterinsurgency have always viewed the tool of dialogues as a sensible way to end conflict regarding insurgency. However, the best exercises, lessons learned, and desirable conditions for conducting successful dialogues have to be analyzed.

This examination could be described as a step in the correct direction; however, this only commences to search the dynamics of dialogues within the conflicts of insurgents and counterinsurgents. The government of Sri Lanka has to enforce reforms to earn the faith and belief of the Tamil population in the country. Mahinda Rajapaksa, the President of Sri Lanka, made a proclamation of victory over the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam on 19 May 2009. However, this does not lessen the significance of the cease of the conflict of the Tamils.

Although the insurgency of Tamil might have been made torpid in the short run, with no attention to the major phenomenon responsible for the conflict, the prospects for peace in the long-term for violence would not be there. While the approach of the military proved to be astoundingly efficient in the destruction of leaders and supporters of the LTTE, the Government of Sri Lanka have to engage in a political solution, in the long-term, in order to soothe the country and improve the legitimacy of the government.¹⁶⁹ Settlement with the Tamils has to happen with the commencement with

¹⁶⁸ Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, 128.

¹⁶⁹ Smith, “The Eelam Endgame?” 67–112.

degeneration of power to regions, which are dominated by Tamil populations, in the eastern and northern Provinces in Sri Lanka. The basic rights of the Tamil people, with promised ethnic identity and autonomy could be described as the only possible means which could be used to preserve peace in the country.¹⁷⁰ Sri Lanka, a supposedly democratic nation, will have to deliver the democratic rights to the Tamil and other minorities in the country. Without enforcing reform measures of political, economic, and social issues to deal with the grudges of the Tamil people, withdrawal of security forces from these provinces would be inappropriate.

Basically, the reason behind the insurgency in the Sri Lankan northern and eastern regions was due to the ethnic discrimination of Tamil civilians over the years. However, over the past several centuries, these ethnicities have grown to develop their own societal norms and values. The Sri Lankan Tamil people represent approximately 13 percent of the population. Members of this ethnic group reside mainly in the northern and eastern region of Sri Lanka. However, there is a small Sri Lankan Tamil community with large business holdings in Colombo. Since a large part of the Sri Lankan population was Sinhalese, therefore, soon after the Sri Lankan independence in the year 1948, they immediately controlled country's authority. After taking control of the country's power they launched a number of laws, which provoked ethnic discrimination. These laws were formulated to benefit the Sinhalese majority and completely excluded the Tamil and other ethnic minorities. The seventies saw a very limited number of violent riots, however, in the eighties many violent riots were escalated by the Tamil resistance which were aimed against the Sri Lankan Sinhalese government.

In July of 1983, these small but violent riots later became a full-blown guerrilla war. Most accounts describe the riots as a Sinhalese reaction to the death of 13 Sri Lankan soldiers, who were killed in an ambush in northern Sri Lanka by the fledgling LTTE. The after-effects of the riots were also devastating. The number of refugees was estimated at 79,000 to 80,000. This noted the beginning of the LTTE insurgency to create separate state for Tamils by the LTTE, and led by Velupillai Prabhakarn. The LTTE used

¹⁷⁰ Antulio J. Echevarria, "Reconsidering War's Logic and Grammar," *Infinity Journal* 2, (2011, spring): 1-7.

far-spreading terrorism and guerrilla war strategies against the public as well as the targeting of government officials throughout the eighties and the nineties. The government of Sri Lanka involved international communities to negotiate on a temporary ceasefire. However, in the spring of 2006, violent riots again erupted when the LTTE carried out a suicidal attack on the Army Headquarters and subsequently closed the Mavil aru gate in the eastern province.

When President Rajapaksha came to power in the year 2005, he promised to create a rejoiced nation with no sign of the Tamil Tigers,¹⁷¹ a promise which echoed with the voices of the devastated nation. Sri Lankan President Rajapaksa, after coming into power in 2005, attempted to transform the features of the government and leadership entirely and employed guerrilla warfare strategies similar to those that were adopted by the Tamil Tigers in the previous three wars of Eelam. The government also attempted to employ the strategies which the Tamil Tigers were using through the prolonged war, which resulted in violent streaks, along with militant propaganda and innovative guerrilla warfare strategies.¹⁷² In the year 2009, the Sri Lankan government was able to militarily defeat LTTE terrorism and establish peace again in the country. Despite the fact that Sri Lanka is a developing nation, the insurgents maintained this war through resources that came to a large extent from external sources. In May of 2009, after a two-and-a-half year military offensive, the Sri Lankan security Forces surrounded the last of the insurgents.

As proof of the insurgency's demise, a photo of LTTE leader Vellupillai Prabhakaran was released, with a bullet hole in his forehead. Selvarasa Pathmanathan, the head of the LTTE's international diplomatic relations committee, released the following statement: "we have already announced to the world our position to silence our guns to save our people."¹⁷³ With that statement, the Tamil Tigers admitted to a military defeat and the longest-running war in South Asia came to an end after 25 years of gruesome devastation.

¹⁷¹ Manogaran, *The Sri Lankan Tamils, Ethnicity and Identity*, 25–43.

¹⁷² Millen, *Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam*.

¹⁷³ Scoop World, LTTE.

Since insurgencies continue to pose domestic and foreign policy challenges, counterinsurgency strategies are politically activated campaigns, which exploit all the elements of the country in order to eradicate the insurgent group.¹⁷⁴ Although combating insurgent groups requires military resources to counteract them, certain non-military resources should also be used to counterbalance. These non-military strategies include re-establishing the local authority and reforming the economy (or development of infrastructure).¹⁷⁵ Although combating insurgent groups through military resources is more direct, certain non-military resources focus on the civilians so that the country's legitimacy can be enhanced and the support for the insurgent groups can be reduced.¹⁷⁶ The insurgent groups and the counterinsurgency strategies combat one another to win the hearts and minds of the civilians.

By 2004, the Sri Lanka intelligence network and proficiency had improved via internal reforms and international support. In general, the entire counterinsurgency strategy of the Sri Lankan government was to overwhelm the Tamil Tigers with the combined impact of both conventional as well as guerrilla combat strategies. Massive coordinated missile attacks were also launched effectively to target the Tamil Tigers. Such aggressive military actions deployed by the Sri Lankan government forced the Tamil Tigers to take defensive measures. The Sri Lankan Army commander deployed three task forces to the north-eastern coastline of the country. This applied added pressure on the Tamil Tigers.¹⁷⁷ Later, the Sri Lankan Army deployed two more task forces to move from the Jaffna region to Kilinochchi to shut the northern side of the border to Jaffna region. Three more task forces were deployed from the southern region. During all this time, the Sri Lankan Army continued fighting the Tamil Tigers and the Sri Lankan Navy continued fighting the Sea Tigers of the LTTE. Yet despite their successes and wealth, the LTTE eventually came to an end. In May of 2009, after a two-and-a-half year military offensive, the Sri Lankan Armed Forces surrounded the last of the insurgents.

¹⁷⁴ Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, 62–63.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 63.

¹⁷⁶ U.S. Army, Field Manual 3–24:Counter Insurgency, 1–1.

¹⁷⁷ Winslow and Woost, *Economy, Culture, and Civil War in Sri Lanka*, 71–73.

During these successful operations, the Tamil Tigers were defeated because they did not anticipate the strength of the superior opponent and did not revise their strategies. They also did not anticipate the new tactics and strategies that were adopted by the military and armed forces of Sri Lanka. After eradicating the leadership and troops of Tamil Tigers, the humanitarian operation was terminated by the Sri Lankan government on 19 May 2009. After almost 25 years, the Sri Lankan government was able to regain complete control of Sri Lanka.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS

This study attempts to address lessons learned from Sri Lanka and how those lessons might compel us to reassess existing counterinsurgency doctrines.

This study of Sri Lanka will not provide exact proposals on the way to conduct a COIN battle. It will also improve the COIN body of literature that scholars and strategists may study further in order to develop COIN strategies and expand the focus of COIN principles. Exclusively, this study is focused on understanding a government's action against internal ethnic terrorism. The winning COIN strategies utilized by Sri Lanka—which had the motto to guarantee that the domestic government is regarded as legitimate by the nation and also that it protects, enhances, and maintains, its right to rule—proved to be successful.

Sergei De Silva Ranasinghe, in his analysis of Sri Lanka's bloody terrorist war, discussed that Sri Lanka's success was due to the "transformation of the military." According to De Silva, the military development and changes commenced in late 2005 with the selection of Mr. Mahindaa Rajapakshe as president, who assigned Gotabaya Rajapaksa as Secretary of the Defense. The Secretary of Defense, along with the three forces commanders, reformed the security forces by nominating talented and motivated military leaders, acquiring of new weaponries, and fervently increasing recruitment and practical and timely training schemas. Also, the Commander of the Army standardized the SIOT including Commandos and Special Forces troops, who hunted the LTTE both in the jungles and LTTE areas in his fight against them. Then, the Navy commander introduced arrowhead boat squadrons (or SBSs) to fight against suicide sea tigers, and the

Air Force transformation provided all kinds of combat support and close air support to ground forces with the available limited resources. In other words, the three services adopted a “clear-hold-build”¹⁷⁸ concept on the ground, sea, and air using small elements instead of mass-scale troops and resources. De Silva claimed that these collective modifications organized the Sri Lankan forces to overrule the many challenges of combatting terrorism. In this context, political and military leadership and transformation of government force offensive actions from conventional to a combination of conventional and irregular warfare tactics are salient issues to be considered in the COIN war.

However, reforms implemented during the Eelam War IV by the Sri Lankan government need to expedite and continue to achieve the faith of the Tamil people and enjoy the genuine win on the insurgency. Though the LTTE terrorism may lay inactive for a temporary period, without focusing on the core issues of the struggle, the long-term panoramas for fierceness continue. While the military methodology was unpredictably effective in eliminating LTTE leadership and factions, the Sri Lankan Government must now move for a long-term political answer to soothe the country and uplift government legitimacy. Reconciliation with the Tamil populace must happen, commencing with decentralization of power. The rights of the Tamils and other minority groups, with guaranteed self-determination and ethnic identity, are the most suitable measures to sustain peace. The Tamil insurgency in Sri Lanka suggests that politicization of ethnic distinctions by major political parties has weakened democracy and its institutions and thus has fueled ethnic violence and conflict, which could not be solved until Eelam War IV. However, good governance and a concurrent reconstruction process managed to significantly reduce those tensions and increase the Tamil population’s level of trust in the government. A continuation of the economic, political, and social development that has started to address the grievances of the Tamil minority during Eelam War IV is

¹⁷⁸A clear-hold-build operation is executed in a specific, high-priority area experiencing overt insurgent operations. COIN efforts should begin by controlling key areas. Security and influence then spread out from secured areas. The pattern of this approach is to clear-hold-build one village, area, or city—and then reinforces success by expanding to other areas. Objectives of this kind of operation are to create a secure physical and psychological environment, establish firm government control of the populace and area and gain the populace’s support.

essential to continue to enjoy a true and lasting victory. Hence, the concurrent reconstruction and rehabilitation process could be highlighted as the next major affair which policymakers and strategists should consider during the planning stage of a COIN war.

The potential policy implications are far-reaching. A positive relationship between civil development and improved security would be a strong argument for additional aid. Indeed, this finding might suggest that resources which are currently being directed towards the military dimension of the counterinsurgency program might be better allocated in civil development. Assistance gained from the civil population during COIN war is of paramount importance since it provides a way to solve troop requirements for various COIN tasks as well as intelligence work, which was effectively utilized during the Sri Lanka war. Thereby, it is suggested for policymakers to work out COIN plans to transform the population to be used as a part of the military body when fighting the guerrilla war. Furthermore, this method also helps to separate insurgents from the population.

The following strategies adopted by SLG and military forces could be considered as additional counterinsurgency strategies or principles when a nation is formulating COIN strategies to fight against insurgents. Even though existing COIN principles and strategies discuss these areas, the proper attention or focus has not been adequately given. Furthermore, these strategies also involve the practice of good governance and foreign policy. Hence, planners need to apply these into the short-term and long-term plans of a country in order to win the guerrilla war and maintain good governance and good relations with other nations:

- Media transparency and propaganda
- Use of technology in a coordinated intelligence network
- External support for the government to fight the war
- Independent government machinery and political stability

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